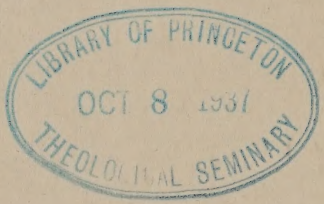
The Future of Christianity

Edgar Sheffield Brightman



BR 85 .B74 1937
Brightman, Edgar Sheffield,
1884-1953.
The future of Christianity

BOOKS BY EDGAR SHEFFIELD BRIGHTMAN

THE FUTURE OF CHRISTIANITY
PERSONALITY AND RELIGION
MORAL LAWS
THE FINDING OF GOD
THE PROBLEM OF GOD
A PHILOSOPHY OF IDEALS
AN INTRODUCTION TO PHILOSOPHY
RELIGIOUS VALUES
THE SOURCES OF THE HEXATEUCH

LIBRARY OF PRINCETON
OCT 8 1937
THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

THE FUTURE OF CHRISTIANITY

EDGAR SHEFFIELD BRIGHTMAN
Borden Parker Bowne Professor
of Philosophy in Boston University

THE ABINGDON PRESS
NEW YORK CINCINNATI CHICAGO

BRIGHTMAN
THE FUTURE OF CHRISTIANITY

Copyright, 1937, by
EDGAR SHEFFIELD BRIGHTMAN

All rights reserved—no part of this book may be reproduced in any form without permission in writing from the publisher, except by a reviewer who wishes to quote brief passages in connection with a review written for inclusion in magazine or newspaper.

Printed in the United States of America

CONTENTS

CHAPTER		PAGE
	PREFACE	7
I.	OUR KNOWLEDGE OF THE FUTURE	9
II.	THE FUTURE OF THE BIBLE AND THE CHURCH	43
III.	THE FUTURE OF GOD	83
IV.	THE FUTURE OF MAN	120

PREFACE

THE chapters of this book are based on a series of four lectures on the Henry Martin Loud Lectureship of 1937. They were delivered in part at the University of Michigan, and in part at the First Methodist Church of Ann Arbor.

To discuss such a theme as the future of Christianity is, to say the least, venturesome. But this unpretentious book is meant as a challenge to Christendom to face inevitable problems, not as a complete treatment or final solution of them. Much is omitted. The future of Roman Catholicism and the ultimate relations of Christianity to Judaism and to other world religions are not touched on, but it is hoped that the reader may find suggestions which will lead him to thought on these further questions. The underlying problem is that of the destiny of spiritual values for all future time.

EDGAR SHEFFIELD BRIGHTMAN.

Newton Center, Massachusetts.

CHAPTER I

OUR KNOWLEDGE OF THE FUTURE

WHAT will the future of Christianity be? This question will call forth as many answers as there are kinds of people. Some will say that Christianity has no future; that it will soon cease to exert any important influence, and will die away into a memory. Others will consult the numerologies of Daniel and Revelation and from them will produce a definite chart of the future in which the triumph of the Christian Church is assured. Others will protest that the future is not revealed, but that human striving can remake the world nearer to the heart's desire. Still others will declare that the future of Christianity and of civilization depends on divine intervention or at least on events which human foresight cannot predict and human effort can neither prevent nor control. Believers, unbelievers, poets, preachers, prophets, scientists, novelists, astrologers, philosophers, dreamers of Utopia, crystal gazers—these all peer into the future and report what they see. The reports are fragmentary and they differ among themselves, but they all bear witness of man's desire to foresee.

What is it that makes us yearn so intensely for knowledge of the future, whether of our religion or of our country or of our culture? Is it sheer childish curiosity? In part, perhaps; yet we need not be too sure that curiosity is merely childish, for it lies at the root of intellectual and spiritual growth. Philosophy, as Plato and Aristotle tell us, was born in wonder.

There is, however, more than curiosity involved. Man is not only a being in time, moving through the vanishing present into a veiled future, but he is also a being with purposes. These purposes can come to fruition only if the future actually will be such as to render their attainment possible. If I am to carry out plans, I must know something of the conditions under which I am to work. If I am to steer my ship to port, I must know where the channel is to be found, and where the rocks and reefs are located. Knowledge of the future would be like a chart to a pilot. But such knowledge would do more than afford practical guidance. It would tend to show more clearly what is permanent in our changing world,—what is merely transitory and what can be depended on at all times. Thus it would strengthen, or perhaps modify, our basis for belief in Christianity or in whatever principles we guide our lives by.

It may be said that all knowledge of the present or the past is for the sake of the future. Man is always building the City of Is-to-Be. His most solid present achievements and his most accurate records of the past are for the sake of leading him into a future in which all the truths of the present and past are preserved and new truths discovered and applied.

Furthermore, the philosophy of pragmatism has rightly pointed out the paradoxical truth that our very knowledge of the past and our understanding of the present both depend on future experiences. If you want to know "for sure," as we say, just what Jesus taught and did, you cannot go back to first-century Palestine and investigate. The past is forever beyond our direct inspection. In order to approach the past

facts about Jesus, you must look to the future and seek experiences you have not yet had. In that future you will assemble all your memories of what you have learned; you will then investigate the records in the New Testament and the other literature of the times; you will perhaps visit Palestine and view ancient sites, or will at least profit from those who have had these experiences; finally you will arrive at something resembling a knowledge of the past. By coincidence, while these words were being penned, the mail brought a copy of *Science* for January 22, 1937, with a leading article by N. C. Nelson entitled "Prehistoric Archaeology, Past, Present, and Future." There is something paradoxical in referring to the future of the prehistoric. But if our knowledge of the prehistoric is not going to be verified and to be increased in the future, then archaeology might as well not have had a past at all; for its past is as nothing if it does not function in its future. Aldous Huxley speaks of the future of the past. Scientists, politicians, and ditch-diggers, whether they are Christians or non-Christians, are all living for tomorrow and next week, and the years to come. To ignore the future is irresponsible folly. To be a conscious person is to be a potential planner, a looker into the future.

Knowledge of the future is therefore our most important knowledge. But at the same time it is our least certain knowledge. We seem to have used our futures more successfully for building up a knowledge of the past than for acquiring a genuine knowledge of the future. Shall we excuse ourselves for this neglect by taking refuge in the assertion that the future is entirely unknowable? That would be to fly in the

face of such knowledge as we have. Who can doubt that we have some trustworthy knowledge of the future? Whatever happens, we cannot believe that a future will come in which the principles of mathematics will not be valid, or in which the law of love will not be the highest moral law in the universe. The predictions of astronomers have never failed, except perhaps when they were testing new hypotheses. The tides have risen and ebbed in accordance with the almanacs, although neither the almanac nor the Weather Bureau has yet been able to foretell storm and sunshine with accuracy. Even where detailed knowledge of the future is lacking, as in regard to the time of a person's death, statistics worked out by actuaries enable insurance companies to look into the future and calculate income and expenditures for years ahead with sufficient approximation to make the insurance business secure and profitable. Accordingly there is available some knowledge of the future which, within its limits and for its purposes, is as accurate as our knowledge of the past, and perhaps more valuable. But when we ask: Is it war or peace? Is Fascism or Communism going to come in Spain or America? Is Christianity destined to flourish in the generations to come or is it to enter upon another period of Dark Ages?—then our knowledge fails us. Historians and diplomats, political and ecclesiastical statesmen—all must confess themselves perplexed.

The problem of the nature and limits of our knowledge of the future is one that has not received sufficient attention. One Wilhelm Sauer, a relatively inconspicuous German scholar, wrote in 1923 a *Philosophy of the Future.* Everyone has heard of Oswald

Spengler's *Decline of the West,* with its prediction of the Spring, Summer, Autumn, and Winter of every culture, and its definite placing of our own civilization in the period of decline and death. There is, in fact, a vast literature of prediction, represented most recently by J. Langdon-Davies's, *A Short History of the Future.* Inevitable dialectics of history and Utopias abound. Nevertheless, it remains true that few have undertaken to look into the question of the nature and limits of our knowledge of the future. It is not the task of these brief studies to undertake so ambitious a program. We shall have to be content with a few suggestions to guide us in our consideration of the future of Christianity.

If we are to distinguish between what is certain and what is uncertain about the future, we may well begin with the proposition that our most certain knowledge is not about what is present or past or future, but, rather, is about what is eternal. This does not mean that we have absolutely certain and demonstrated knowledge about the eternal God. Our knowledge of God is not of the order of scientific proof. However confident we may be of our God, and however real may be our experience of him, we are aware that our assurance rests in part on faith. If there is a kinship between religious faith and scientific hypothesis, so that both religion and science fall short of perfect proof, there is at least one branch of knowledge in which, although we still have to start from postulates as we do in religion, we are nevertheless able to arrive at precise and demonstrably accurate results, namely, the field of logic and mathematics.

Logic and mathematics give us truths which are

true at all times, so that we have every reason to believe that they will be true in every future that will come as long as time endures. Yet there is a peculiarity about logical and mathematical knowledge, namely, that it gives us no information at all about any specific future event. In fact, logic and mathematics alone are rightly called formal sciences; they give us the forms of knowledge, but they give us nothing about its content. Mathematics, as Bertrand Russell has said, tells us nothing about the world, not even that there is one. Only when mathematics is applied to observations outside the field of mathematics, does it lead to real knowledge of the future. Our almanacs do not derive their information about the time of sunrise and sunset for the coming year from mathematics alone, but from mathematics applied to astronomical observations. Pure logic and pure mathematics have nothing to do with asserting that any event in time has occurred, is occurring, or will occur. They are confined to assertions about what is always valid. Hence we say that they deal with eternal truths. These eternal truths of logic and mathematics are our most certain knowledge. To know that a valid syllogism always yields a necessary conclusion and that $(x + y)^2 = x^2 + 2xy + y^2$ is indeed to possess eternal truth; but it is to shed very little light on the future of Christianity. Yet perhaps there is some light even in this realm; for a universe in which the laws of reason are always true is a universe in which God would be at home. Plato taught that God geometrizes, and Plato was probably right. Yet we need to know more about God than his loyalty to formal logic and his ability to use mathematics before

we can draw any definite conclusions about the future of the Christian religion.

If we turn from our knowledge of the eternal to what we take to be our most assured knowledge of the actual future, a somewhat different situation confronts us. In physics, chemistry, and astronomy we have knowledge that has been verified so many times without exception that we are confident in trusting those sciences as giving us certain knowledge about the future. Before a bridge is built, physics tells us exactly how it should be constructed in order to stand the strains to which it will be subjected. Before a ship is launched, we know her speed in knots. A planetarium can not only show the position of a star as it was at any given time in the past, but it can also show what its position will be at any given time in the future. The word "astronomical" in popular speech has two connotations: one, as in astronomical figures, meaning figures too vast for the imagination to grasp or for thought to comprehend; and the other, as in astronomical accuracy, meaning the exactness with which predictions, as of tides and eclipses, can be made. Chemistry, likewise, can predict with infallible accuracy what will happen when elements or compounds combine, and what effects the combinations and separations of elements will have on human life and welfare.

Anyone who contemplates the achievements of science with the problem of the future in mind will be tempted to exclaim, "Surely the human mind has now reached the stage of development at which it can penetrate not only into the mysteries of eclipses and comets, which once were superstitiously taken as por-

tents of disasters from an angry God, but also into the secrets of human destiny!" If we can know so much about distant stars and their future movements, surely we can know more about what is near by—ourselves and our neighbors, and the future of human life. Yet, strangely enough, such knowledge of the future does not seem to be available to the greatest minds. When predictions about the human future have come true, as a rule they strike us as lucky guesses. At any rate, no one has discovered a formula for anything resembling a precise forecast of the life of any human individual or society.

The knowledge of the future given to us by physical, chemical, and astronomical science is, indeed, exact and reliable; but it gives no light at all on the future of humanity. These sciences afford us a framework within which we know humanity on this earth will have to live, but they do not impart to us any information about what human life will become within that framework. They show us a vast field of possible choices for man, but they do not indicate what any of the choices will be: whether physical and chemical knowledge will be used by architects and builders, engineers and physicians, for social development and social health, or whether they will be used by statesmen and generals, or by conspirators and criminals, for social warfare and social destruction. If we compare the physical universe to an automobile, we find ourselves in the possession of a marvelously equipped car, with all the latest inventions and gadgets. We know exactly how to drive it, what its speed limit is, how quickly it can be started and stopped, how to steer it and turn it around. The one

thing we do not know and cannot deduce from the fullest possible knowledge of the car is the direction in which it will go. We know its mechanism, but we do not know its destination. The more scientific knowledge we have of the material world, the more evident it becomes that physical knowledge sheds no light on our spiritual nature, or on the purpose for which man is living. Oliver Wendell Holmes is said to have declared that the millennium would certainly come the week after the Hoosac tunnel was completed, if ever. But he exaggerated the dependence of the spiritual on the physical. We need to know all we can know about the future of matter, and man's mastery of physical knowledge is itself a great spiritual achievement. Without any knowledge of physical laws, man's spiritual life on this earth would be so seriously hampered that it would eventually become extinct. But unless man knows more than the physical, his spiritual life is just as surely doomed.

Here, then, is one limitation of our most certain scientific knowledge of the future: it tells us the physical framework within which human history, including religion, will take place, but it abstains from telling us what the human spirit will do or should do within that framework. Let us consider the worst that physical science could tell us about the future. Let us suppose that it could predict with certainty that the earth would cool off, or that a collision with some wandering heavenly body should occur, so that all life on the earth would be destroyed (and on any view it is most improbable that life should continue forever on this planet), and let us also suppose that the second law of thermodynamics had led to a state

of entropy in the physical universe so that the whole physical cosmos had run down and could do no more work. While considering this breathtaking prospect, let us pause for a moment to reassure ourselves that many authorities doubt whether such a state of affairs would ever occur. But we are better off if we face the worst. Suppose, then, that science could predict for our information that the whole physical universe, including, of course, all human bodies, were thus to run down. Would that settle the question about the future of Christianity? It would not, for the simple reason that no statement about the physical universe has taken into account the nature of spiritual reality. Christianity rests on the faith that the spiritual is more real and more important than the material. If Christians knew that the whole frame of physical nature were going to become stagnant or be blotted out entirely, they would not lose their faith in the future of the spirit—that is, they would not lose faith after hearing this physical prophecy provided they had faith before hearing it. This does not mean that religious faith is impervious to facts; it means only that it is impervious to irrelevant facts. Christian faith rests on facts, but the facts on which it rests are primarily the facts of moral and religious experience and only secondarily the facts of physics and chemistry. Not that God and religion have nothing to do with matter, but, rather, that matter is a revelation of God and an instrument of religion only in so far as it expresses and realizes values. Now it is precisely this religiously important aspect of matter that the sciences ignore; while religious faith holds that, if nature reveals a God who is eternally

creating and realizing values, then nature might perish and God would remain. He would be the guarantee of a future, in which some means for the expression of value would be provided.

Besides not telling us the future of values, the statements of the natural sciences about the future are limited in another way. This limitation may be made clear by a simple illustration. When I say, "I shall meet you at the post office at ten A. M. tomorrow," I have made an unconditional prediction which amounts to a promise. But when I say, "If it is convenient, then I shall meet you at the time and place specified," I have made a conditional prediction without a promise. Now, all our scientific knowledge of the future is of the second class; none is of the first class. All scientific predictions are in the form "if-then." We sometimes see a sign on a small bridge reading: "No weight over twenty tons allowed on this bridge." This is based on the scientific prediction that *if* a weight over twenty tons crosses the bridge, *then* the structure of the bridge is in danger of collapse. The prediction is strictly conditional. But the physicist cannot predict unconditionally that any weight over twenty tons will ever cross or try to cross the bridge. So with all other scientific predictions. It is, of course, true that many predictions are practically unconditional. We are sure about sunrise and sunset because we feel sure that no great catastrophe will happen to earth or sun or solar system. But all specific scientific predictions about the future must be conditional and carry the qualification, "if nothing interferes." In contrast with this, religion is more sweeping and presumptuous in its claims than is science, for God is the

one and only Being with whom nothing external to himself can interfere. Statements of religious faith are, indeed, conditional, in so far as they say, "Thy will be done," or "If God wills it." But when faith asserts that "God is good" and "God will always control the future," it is intending to speak unconditionally. Our most certain scientific knowledge about the future does not give us what religion claims.

If we continue to consult science for light about the future, another disappointment confronts us. Physics, chemistry, and astronomy, we found, are our most certain basis for prediction of the future; but they deal with matter and not with man's spiritual life. If we turn to the sciences that deal with man, and consequently are of the greatest moment for our insight into the human future, we find that they afford us far less certainty than the physical sciences. In fact, our least certain knowledge is that which deals with the human future.

Biology is one of the sciences that is concerned with human nature more directly than are the physicochemical sciences. It has made great advances in discovering the laws of life cells and organisms, the principles of evolution and heredity, and those governing the influence of the endocrine glands on life. For instance, the law of heredity discovered by the modest, brilliant monk, Gregor Mendel, in his patient experiments with peas, has enabled biologists to make many predictions about heredity that are almost unconditional. Endocrinology opens up vast perspectives for the possible prediction and control of human behavior. Nevertheless, the actual knowledge which biology gives us about the future course of evo-

lution is highly speculative and far from definite. The vagueness of this knowledge is due to several considerations. The complexity of the factors at work in the life stream of the race is too great to allow them to be grasped and understood completely; even if all biological laws could be known, the conditions under which they operate include the whole of humanity and its natural environment. There is, moreover, as yet no way of predicting when new characters will arise in evolution or when and how some new species may develop. Man may, by what is known as artificial selection, guide the forces of nature toward new species, but man cannot tell when or how nature produces the variations which point the way to new species. By his knowledge of the glands, the biologist may endow man with new powers and possibilities; but no biological experiment can regulate man's conduct so that he will never misuse his freedom or so that he will always give his loyalty to the highest values. Indeed, the greatest achievements of biology are much less accurate than those of physics, chemistry, and astronomy, and afford us much less precise knowledge of the framework within which human history must occur than do the latter. If we consult the biologist regarding the future of Christianity, his only reply can be: "If Christianity prevails, biology can give it knowledge that means power for the greater development of a nobler, stronger humanity; but if Christianity fails, biology may be used for the perversion and degradation of the race."

If biology will not answer our questions about the future, perhaps history will. The study of history surveys the development of human culture as far back

as knowledge goes. We might expect it to give light on the future; and we say, "History repeats itself"—a maxim which is not without a certain degree of verification. But the real historian is very chary of predictions. It is true that historical perspective serves as a check on hasty inferences and often indicates directions of possible or even probable development. Yet historians do not venture to predict coming events as astronomers do the tides. Even the makers of almanacs, who indulge in casual advance speculations about the weather for the year and are usually wrong, know better than to insert such predictions of coming events as: "About this time, the overthrow of Hitler followed by a revival of the League of Nations." In the background of this caution lies the fact that the science of history is more uncertain about the future than is meteorology itself. The witty Mr. Dooley once wrote: "History is a postmortem examination. It tells you what a country died iv, but I'd like to know what it lived iv." Historians know, without Mr. Dooley's gibes, how limited is their knowledge of the living present, and they will pass no judgments on what is now going on until they have access to the sources, which may not be for a century and may be never. How insecure, then, is our knowledge of the past! How biased by national and personal prejudice! The history of Christianity is but dimly known to us. This, however, is a cause for reassurance in the midst of so many uncertainties, for it proves that neither precise historical knowledge nor ability to predict is essential to the power of a great religion or for its continued hold on humanity for good.

Anthropology and sociology are in a similar state

with history. They show us much of what has been and of what may be. They offer many instances of if-then knowledge. But they do not tell us what the future of man will be.

Is psychology, or its branch, psychiatry, better situated? It has made amazing strides, but it is not a unified science. Behaviorism, Gestalt, and various other schools divide psychologists on fundamentals. On the other hand, the slow, patient method of experiment has led to vast collections of facts which await interpretation. Psychology cannot predict its own future development, much less that of humanity. No one knows whither the recent experiments in telepathy at Duke University will lead. Nevertheless, a competent psychologist can go far today in discovering what is wrong with an individual or group and how the source of psychological trouble may be removed or controlled. As medicine, based on our biological and physicochemical knowledge, has removed many physical ills, so psychology has removed many of the psychological ills with which man has been tormented. Psychology is an instrument of possible control of the human future, within limits; but the most ardent determinist would not assert that he knows enough about any human being to predict exactly what he will do in a life situation. Certain forms of reaction, of course, can be predicted in the light of previous knowledge of the individual. We may know in advance a subject's knee-jerk, or the responses of a color-blind person to color stimulation. But important complex reactions are not predictable. As long as freedom and creativity are ultimate facts of experience it hardly seems probable that the future of

a human personality, or of a society of such personalities, can ever be mapped out in advance by psychological science.

The study and use of statistics has grown in recent years by leaps and bounds, and an occasional statistical investigation gives some idea of coming events in the economic or political world. Many such prognoses fail, as everyone knows. It was remarked that insurance companies rely on statistics for their whole procedure in determining rates. But to that remark we have to add that all statistical predictions are of the conditional if-then variety previously mentioned. Such calculations are to the effect that *if* the chief factors are relatively constant, *then* the results will conform to statistical expectation. But it is conceivable that war or pestilence or some unheard-of cosmic disaster might upset the best-laid plans of the actuaries. Statistical knowledge, furthermore, however useful and probable it may be for giving us information about large numbers of people, can give us no definite light at all on the future of the individual. Statistics give us averages; but there is no real average person. We live our individual lives and no one of us conforms exactly to the expectations of workers with statistics.

If there is any science pretending to give us knowledge of the future which has been overlooked in this brief survey, the oversight was not intentional. Someone may allege that astrology is such a science. Perhaps I should therefore pause for a brief astrological parenthesis. Let me say that a kindly friend who is, I suppose, an unusually well-read and competent student of the subject, has voluntarily written for me a

long and apparently well-documented horoscope without making any charge for the service, so that no economic incentives entered in and sincere desire for truth was the only conscious determinant. After a careful study of the horoscope, I must say that I found its references to the past largely so general that they would apply to almost anyone in my profession; some were erroneous and a few were definite and correct. Some time has elapsed since the casting of the horoscope and there has been opportunity to test its predictive success. Nothing like its main predictions for the near future has occurred or seems at all likely to occur. Even if one or two items should come to pass, it is evident that the horoscope could not be used as a guide in planning the future, since one could never distinguish between the predictions that would be fulfilled and those that would fail of fulfillment. Reports of the experiences of others with this pseudo science generally coincide with my own, except that in many cases false hopes or groundless fears have sometimes led to tragedy when the horoscope was trusted. The utmost that can be said for astrology is that its predictions may sometimes cause a person to bestir himself for the attainment of a desirable or desired end. But it fails completely as a guide to the future. It gives us no trace of the accurate if-then knowledge of the real sciences and of course not the slightest unconditional knowledge of the future. Correct predictions in this or that case do not refute this statement, for astrologers can give no guidance before the event for determining which predictions are in the lucky minority of correct ones, and which in the vast majority of incorrect ones. Adieu, astrology.

Confining ourselves to the serious sciences, we may concisely summarize the results of our search for light by the proposition that no science warrants unconditional, certain, concrete statements about the future. Logic and mathematics give us certainty, but these sciences give us no concrete information at all. The physicochemical sciences give us concrete information, but it is not so certain as the propositions of logic and mathematics, and it is conditional; it is of the if-then type, but it does not tell what physicians or statesmen or bandits are going to do with the laws of physical nature. The sciences which deal with man, the anthropological or humanistic sciences, as we may call them, are concrete in their subject matter, but are neither unconditional nor certain.

In spite of these limitations of science, and in spite of the further fact that many of the greatest scientific inventors have had to struggle against the incredulity of their fellow scientists, it would be utter folly to suppose that science is not the chief instrument of man's intelligence for the making of a better future, or to overlook the supreme practical importance either of the abundant if-then knowledge with which science has provided us or of the large number of probable predictions with which it has provided us.

Nevertheless, the fact remains: scientific certainty about the future is not available to us. But the truly Christian soul has always faced the future with hope and faith. If he has tried to translate that hope and faith into a literal and dogmatic picture of what the future is going to be, he has often become grotesque. It is significant that most of the supposed predictions in Daniel and Revelation were written, not as a fore-

telling of what was to come, but as a description (understandable perhaps only to the initiated who knew that the number of the beast referred to Nero Caesar) of events which have occurred within the lifetime of the writer. Yet, despite this fact, the writers of Daniel and of Revelation, together with all religious souls everywhere, were men who faced the future with hope and faith. Now, the extraordinary fact is that, although this hope is not knowledge and cannot be proved by scientific means, yet the faith of believers in the goodness of the supreme power in the universe, and in the historic revelation of that power in Christ and in Christian history, has been verified repeatedly in life. Over and over the downfall of Christianity has been predicted. Over and over men of faith have been derided by unbelievers. But through the centuries Christianity has survived and believers have found an experience of God in Christ that the world could not give or take away. The basic prediction of faith, "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world," has thus far been verified.

Furthermore, it appears to be true that those who have relied on moral or religious insight have sometimes foreseen the future with greater clarity than the most learned scientists. Relatively few correct predictions about the long-run course of history can be traced to scientists or philosophers; many such are ascribed to saints and prophets, poets and seers, who see things from the point of view of religious values. Why is this?

Perhaps we may be helped to answer this question if we look into the fundamental differences between scientific and religious affirmations about the future.

Scientific predictions are based on repeated experiments. Observations made under controlled conditions are verified by anyone who is competent to understand the conditions, conform to them, and make the observations. Religious predictions, on the other hand, are expressions of faith. Faith, of course, is not sheer dogma or groundless desire; and religion is not alone in needing faith for its life, since science itself rests on postulates of faith. The very belief that there has been a past that was but is not and a future that is not yet but will be, can, in the nature of the case, never be verified in any present experience without presupposing faith in a rationally ordered world. But it cannot well be denied that the faith of religion goes further beyond observed and verified facts than does scientific knowledge. If man is intended to be simply a knower of certainties, then he should indeed limit himself to verified facts and leave religion alone. In that case he may be restricted to the immediate present. But if he is intended to be a doer, an explorer, an aspirer in the realm of the spirit, his every act must be directed toward a future that he cannot fully foresee; without some sort of faith he cannot live a spiritual life, personally or socially. The objective disinterestedness which is essential to science is deadly to spiritual growth unless it is supplemented by loyalty to spiritual values. Only a faith about the future ever leads to the creation of a future that should be. Current history is full—tragically full—of evidence of the power of faith to change the history of great nations. But religion affirms a far more universal, powerful, and well-grounded object of faith than do dialectical materialism or theories of race,

blood, and soil. Its faith is rational. Accordingly, the first difference between scientific and religious predictions is that the former are grounded chiefly on verified observations, the latter chiefly on rational faith.

A second difference to be noted is that scientific prediction deals primarily with physical facts, whereas religious prediction deals primarily with spiritual experiences of moral, religious, aesthetic, and intellectual values. This difference is not absolute, of course. What happens in the physical realm has inevitable influences on the spiritual, and spiritual events influence physical. But for science, the spiritual is really irrelevant. A scientific prediction about the phases of the moon is unable to tell us whether those phases will tend to develop lunatics or lovers. And there is a limited sense in which the physical is irrelevant for religion. It is the business of religion to concern itself about matter only in so far as matter has an influence on the spiritual life or can be used for spiritual ends. The scientific interest in the future is primarily an interest in the increase of human knowledge of the laws of nature. The religious interest is primarily an interest in the increase of the value of human existence, the ideals to be sought, the purposes to be realized.

A third difference is that between what may be called the definiteness of science and the indefiniteness of religion. The strength of science lies in the definiteness of what it has to say about the future. If it offers knowledge of the eternal, in logic and mathematics, it is rigorously exact and unambiguous. There is no vagueness or fuzziness permitted. If it offers

conditional knowledge of the if-then type of which we have spoken, it is also exact, or, if approximate, it tells us just how approximate. The religious attitude toward the future is in marked contrast with this scientific definiteness. Indeed, it might almost be said that one of the greatest spiritual achievements of religion is its indefiniteness. If a person agrees to serve the Lord in return for a definite consideration which includes accurate and pleasing details about his entire future and that of his kin and country, Satan has received an answer to his ancient query, "Doth Job fear God for nought?" The answer is in the negative, and Job's religion is a purely mercenary transaction. But the story of Job depicts him as repudiating the whole mercenary view of religion. He does not have any definite idea of what the reasons of God were or what the future will bring forth; yet he trusts that his "Redeemer liveth." Religious faith rises to its sublimest heights when the future is darkest. It is not religious to say, "I must see the future clearly or I will not move." It is religious to say, "Let come what will, I trust God." Once a person has examined the grounds for faith and has decided to commit his life to God, the decision has been made. After that, the future is in God's hands. There can be no prayer, no wish, no hope for the future, which does not contain as an essential part the ultimate thought of Jesus: "Nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done." There may be objection to calling this indefiniteness about the future, since it rests on so definite a conception of the character of God. Yet it is precisely his faith in God which satisfies the truly religious personality so completely that he is content to be indefinite

in all of his other knowledge about the future. The security of the Christian does not depend on his scientific forecasts of the coming years; it depends on God. Let all else be indefinite; God is sure. This peculiarity of the religious mind is one that is not easy for a modern to grasp, but it must be reckoned with if we are to understand the religious attitude to the future in contrast with the scientific.

Consideration of these differences has prepared us for the great characteristic of religious knowledge, namely, its faith in the supremacy of spirit over matter. Religion has no reason to quarrel with science or to raise any question about the laws of matter. What is essential to religion is its basic value judgment that all the laws of matter are subject to spirit. The ultimate control of the universe lies with spiritual purpose, not with physical necessity. This faith is the very heart of all real religion.

The supremacy of spirit over matter is the faith of the first verse of Genesis: "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." It is idle to dispute about the Hebraic or the philosophical meaning of the verb "created"; its meaning is not the main point. The main point is that divine control is affirmed. The last verse of Revelation implies the same faith with the benediction: "The grace of the Lord Jesus be with the saints. Amen." In the beginning and at the end the Lord is in control. Religion as the belief in the power of the spirit sometimes is expressed in language that seems to the outsider absurd. The prophet Isaiah, in one of his famous utterances, is condemning the policy of those who seek to save the nation by a military alliance with Egypt. After mak-

ing the very reasonable statement that "the Egyptians are men, and not God," he adds the words, "and their horses flesh, and not spirit." For the unspiritual realist, it would be fairly obvious that horses in the flesh would accomplish more than purely spiritual ones. But for the prophet, precisely the opposite was the obvious truth, namely, that spirit alone was sufficient to contend against flesh. The same affirmation is especially characteristic of the New Testament. "Be of good cheer, I have overcome the world." "The things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal." "The kingdom of the world is become the kingdom of our Lord, and of his Christ: and he shall reign for ever and ever."

From this central faith of the supremacy of spirit over matter there follows a corollary, which is, that matter is essentially transitory. Matter fades, it rusts, it grows old, it dies. This does not mean that matter is merely illusory or unreal; it means rather that, however real matter may be, it affords no basis for spiritual life, no permanent ideal to guide the soul, no satisfying experience. There are some, it is true, who call themselves materialists and yet find in the nature of matter ground for the hope of a better future. This is notably true of the so-called dialectical materialism of the Communists. But this peculiar type of materialism is not materialistic in the full and usual sense of the word. It is really a mistaken and disguised form, but still a form, of the belief in the supremacy of spirit over matter; for it holds that the processes of matter are such that social injustices and class distinctions and poverty will eventually be done away with entirely as a result of those processes. The rea-

son that dialectical materialism has so strong a hold on the leaders and the masses of Russia is not that it is a materialistic philosophy; the reason is partly that it is a philosophy of freedom from socially unjust ecclesiasticism, but chiefly that it is a materialism with a goal for the future, an ideal Kingdom of the unnamed God, for which the whole creation groaneth and travaileth together in pain until now. But the essence of genuine materialism is that it denies cosmic purpose and asserts that the inevitable end of all human endeavor is the triumph of matter over spirit.

The unique character of religious knowledge of the future is brought out by contrasting it not with scientific knowledge, but with the best knowledge of the future that irreligious man is able to attain. Let us compare two classical examples of the irreligious with two of the religious.

It is surely not unfair to speak of Bertrand Russell as irreligious if we define religion as meaning faith in the cosmic triumph of spirit over matter now and for the future. It is true that his most famous essay, "A Free Man's Worship," expressed a kind of religious attitude which faces a hostile universe with unyielding despair and defiantly refuses to surrender spirit to the overwhelming power of matter until the last inevitable day of death. Russell's view of the future is epitomized in these well-known lines:

> No fire, no heroism, no intensity of thought and feeling, can preserve an individual life beyond the grave; . . . all the labours of the ages, all the devotion, all the inspiration, all the noonday brightness of human genius, are destined to extinction in the vast death of the solar system, and . . . the whole temple of Man's achievement

must inevitably be buried beneath the débris of a universe in ruins.[1]

As if this negation, written in 1902, were not a sufficiently complete and thorough denial of religion, when it comes to the Preface to the edition of 1921, Russell states that he now feels less convinced than he did in 1902 of the objectivity of good and evil. Less than that conviction would seem to be considerably less than none at all.

Russell's view of the future is that of the intellectual materialist. In Lord Macbeth, Shakespeare has pictured a weak character driven into moral materialism. And what is Macbeth's estimate of the future?

> From this instant,
> There's nothing serious in mortality . . . .
>
> Tomorrow, and tomorrow, and tomorrow,
> Creeps in this petty pace from day to day
> To the last syllable of recorded time,
> And all our yesterdays have lighted fools
> The way to dusty death. Out, out, brief candle!
> Life's but a walking shadow, a poor player
> That struts and frets his hour upon the stage
> And then is heard no more: it is a tale
> Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury,
> Signifying nothing.

There is a profound tension and tragedy within the human spirit which makes it all but impossible for any deeply sincere spirit to feel absolutely certain of the truth either of religion or of materialism. Whichever choice one makes, doubts will sometimes haunt the

[1] B. Russell, *Mysticism and Logic*, (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1921), pp. 47-48.

soul. Even Christ on the cross is not exempt from the feeling of being forsaken by his God. "The seeming unreality of the spiritual life" comes as a mood to all. But there is, I believe, a revelation of ultimate truth in the fact that no doubt of the reality of the spiritual life has ever reached such depths of anguished negation as Macbeth's doubt of the reality of the materialistic life. In materialism there is no future at all. In religion hope accompanies the deepest despair.

Religious faith in the transitoriness of a materialistic life is expressed in a powerful passage from Hosea. That prophet looked on the god Baal as the embodiment of all that is sensuous and unspiritual. He said (13. 1-4a): "When Ephraim spake, there was trembling; he exalted himself in Israel: but when he offended in Baal, he died. And now they sin more and more, and have made them molten images of their silver, even idols according to their own understanding, all of them the work of the craftsmen: they say of them, Let the men that sacrifice kiss the calves. Therefore they shall be as the morning cloud, and as the dew that passeth early away, as the chaff that is driven with the whirlwind out of the threshing-floor, and as the smoke out of the chimney. Yet I am Jehovah thy God." Matter and the materialistic life, whether cloud or dew, chaff or smoke or silver—it all passes early away according to the prophetic intuition, but God, the spirit of love and justice, abides. This confidence in God with which religious faith always confronts the future is again stated in compact and powerful form by the writer of the First Epistle of John (2. 17): "And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth

for ever." A comparison of these utterances with the general drift of the testimony of history leaves one with an impression of the fundamental truth of the religious faith in the supremacy of spirit. The ultimate future is with the spirit. This affirmation of religion is of the utmost importance for any philosophy of the future such as we are trying to outline.

Does this faith have to stand entirely on its own feet as an intuition of the religious soul, or has it been to some extent verified? It is obvious that any belief about the final outcome of the universe—whether the belief of Saint Paul or that of Bertrand Russell—cannot ever be fully verified until the universe reaches its end. But it is possible to examine the degree of success that has attended long-range predictions which rest on materialism on the one hand, and on religion on the other.

It would be worth while for someone to make a careful investigation of prophecies by materialists. So far as I know, a thorough investigation has never been made. But meanwhile, facts that are available suggest a working hypothesis. It is that predictions by materialists tend to fall into two classes, namely, the class of the too pessimistic and the class of the too optimistic. The class of the too pessimistic is illustrated by Bertrand Russell. For the ultimate future he sees nothing but a blank wall and utter despair. The class of the too optimistic is illustrated by the Marxian dialectical materialists. Many a Marxist sees the early and inevitable downfall of capitalism, followed by the dictatorship of the proletariat and the world-wide success of the new communistic order, accompanied by the famous withering away of the state.

In other words, whether pessimistic or optimistic, the materialist tends to oversimplify the problem both of nature and of human nature. If you reduce everything to matter, you have a world that you can manage simply, accurately, and scientifically. But if you really mean what you say about it, there is plenty of matter in your world, but no mind to guide it—no God, no spirit, divine or human. Mind has either been left out or reduced to a form of matter.

On the other hand, if you take into account the spiritual life as a reality and build your faith on it, you have a more complex and incalculable world on your hands. It is easier to calculate the whereabouts of the sun, moon, and stars at any given time than to make an exact prediction about where a human being, man or woman, will be at the same time. Into human conduct there enters the unpredictable factor of freedom, not to mention the subtlety and complexity of the life of the mind and all the differences between consciousness and matter. How much more difficult is it to predict the purposes of God!

In spite of this character of the spiritual world, it is nevertheless true that predictions which have rested on faith in the supremacy of the spirit have in the long run tended to come true. Let us look into cases. It is carefully explained by Biblical scholars, of course, that Old Testament prophecy is forth-telling, not foretelling; that it is expression of the eternal divine truth rather than prediction. Granted. But no one can read the records without finding a considerable amount of prediction. At the height of its prosperity, Amos predicted the fall of Israel; and Israel fell. If this prediction be regarded as too easy and obvious

to be a fair test, since the event was coming so soon, one cannot deny the impressiveness of the doom pronounced on the greatest civilizations of the Ancient World. Without scientific historical knowledge and perspective to guide them, led only by the principles of moral and spiritual truth as revealed in their own experience of God, the prophets looked at the greatest empires the world had ever seen, the Assyrian and the Babylonian, and, measuring them by the standards of the spirit, pronounced their doom. From a materialistic standpoint, the prophets had everything against them; and everything was against them except God and his truth. Assyria fell and Babylon fell. Likewise the seer of Patmos looked at the modern Babylon of his own day, measured it by the standards of Christian faith, and declared, "Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great, which hath made all the nations to drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication." Rome required Caesar worship; John called this worshiping the beast, and he heard an angel saying with a great voice: "Fear God, and give him glory; for the hour of his judgment is come: and worship him that made the heaven and the earth and sea and fountains of waters." To a Roman politician or government official of the day, these declarations would appear bombastic, if annoyingly radical. But the point is that they were right and Rome did fall.

Not only were the Biblical predictions right in their judgments of doom on materialistic civilizations; they were also right in their judgments of hope of spiritual advance. It is true that many Christians have treated the Biblical prophecies so literally and unscientifically that any reference to Old Testament prophecy almost

leads one to expect a Seventh-Day Adventist or a Witness of Jehovah to appear on the scene. (Parenthetically, let me remark that very few high-minded scientists, philosophers, and modernists have so good a war record as these very misguided Witnesses of Jehovah.) There is manifestly no doubt at all that the prophetic writings have been treated as books of magic and as almanacs of the future in a manner most distressing to judicious believers in religion. But it would be unfair and unreasonable to disregard the facts of Old Testament prophecy merely because they have been misused. One might as well deny that the American Revolution occurred because it has been exploited by professional patriots, or deny that Russia exists because it is misrepresented.

What, then, is the evidence? Throughout the Old Testament one sees an expectation of a better future. A ruler nobler than any Assyrian or Babylonian king, not a military conqueror but a Prince of Peace, is dimly seen to be coming. It is from Israel that this ruler shall come. Perhaps Israel herself shall be a Suffering Servant to bear the sin of many. But whatever the historical origins or variants of this expectation, the Messianic hope prevailed throughout the Old Testament. Even when it was thought of politically and nationalistically, it was represented as a triumph of the spirit. Who can deny that this triumph of the spirit was actually fulfilled in Jesus? Jesus, in turn, himself made predictions of the future. Jerusalem was to fall and the Kingdom was to come. Jerusalem fell, but we are still perplexed about the Kingdom, and Jesus himself did not know the day or the hour. In the lives of hundreds of millions the Kingdom has

come; and still the world is unconvinced, is anxious and distraught and is peering into the yet unknown future wondering whether what lies ahead is the Kingdom of Christ or chaos.

After all, leaving the Bible and the Christian faith to one side for the moment, is it not true that the only significant way to foresee the future of the spirit is to know the spirit? One vivid illustration from the nineteenth century of the soundness of prediction based on spiritual insight is found in Heinrich Heine's work called *Deutschland,* in which he briefly surveyed the history of religion and philosophy. At the end of that work Heine seemed possessed by the spirit of prophecy, and gave voice to ideas such as these:

> The German revolution will not turn out to be milder and softer because Kantian Critique and Fichtean transcendental idealism and even philosophy of nature preceded it. Through these very doctrines revolutionary forces have been developed which await the day when they shall break forth and fill the world with terror and wonder. . . . The philosopher of nature will be frightful as he enters into connection with the primeval forces of nature, and conjures up the demonic powers of the old Germanic pantheism. . . . Smile not at the dreamer who expects the same revolution in the realm of phenomena which has taken place in the realm of the spirit. Thought precedes deed as lightning thunder. The German thunder is a German and not very spry, and comes rolling along slowly; but it will come, and if you once hear it crash as it never crashed before in world history, then you will know that the German thunder has reached its goal. At its sound eagles will fall from the air dead and lions in the farthest desert of Africa will tuck their tails between their legs and creep away into their royal dens. A play will be acted in Germany in comparison with which the French Revolution will look like a harmless idyl.

Heine's remarkable prophecy is far from exact; but who can fail to see in it the spiritual features of National Socialism?

Even more remarkable, but similarly based on insight into spiritual reality, is Tolstoy's prediction in his work *What Then Must We Do?,* written in 1884. He said:

> Try as we may to hide from ourselves the simple, most obvious danger that the patience of those whom we are stifling may be exhausted; try as we may to counteract that danger by all sorts of deception, violence, and cajolery—that danger is growing every day and every hour and has long threatened us, but now has matured so that we hardly maintain ourselves in our little boat above the roaring sea, which already washes over us and threatens angrily to swallow and devour us. The workers' revolution with horrors of destruction and murder, not merely threatens us, but we have been living over it for some thirty years already, and only for a while have some managed by various temporary devices to postpone its eruption. Such is the condition of Europe; such is the condition with us, and it is yet worse with us, because it has no safety valves. . . . To return to the old ways is impossible, to restore the ruined prestige is impossible. . . . The danger is ever growing and the terrible catastrophe draws nearer.[1]

In Heine, a forewarning of the Nazi revolution; in Tolstoy a forewarning of the Communist revolution. In both, prediction of the future based on insight into the supremacy of the spirit.

One is not to gather from these examples that a moral or religious view of the world offers a technique whereby coming revolutions can be forecast. But one

[1] Leo Tolstoy, *What Then Must We Do?* (Oxford University Press, 1925), pp. 357-358 (in *The World's Classics Series*).

may well conclude from them that there is a spiritual reality which is spiritually discerned, and that moral causes are at least as significant in history as material ones.

What, then, have we learned from our attempt to consider the kind of knowledge of the future given to us by science and by religion? We have found that science gives us certain approaches to the future in what we have called knowledge of the eternal and conditional knowledge of the if-then type. We have found that religious faith gives us confidence in the future supremacy of spiritual values over material processes. It would be folly to refuse to avail ourselves of any possible resources as we confront so baffling a task as that of seeking to estimate the future of Christianity.

There was a time when Christianity was not. Then the world found God by other means. Will a time come when Christianity will not be? Will it die and rise again in some other form? Or is it unconquerable? The wise Confucius once remarked that "It is characteristic of the most entire sincerity to be able to foreknow." In the following chapters we confront a searching test of our sincerity.

CHAPTER II

THE FUTURE OF THE BIBLE AND THE CHURCH

As we turn our thought from general principles of scientific and religious knowledge of the future to particular aspects of the future of Christianity, such as the Bible and the Church, let it not be supposed that our aim is to set down a calendar of future events. The aim is, rather, to stimulate thought about the future in order that present attitudes, plans, and purposes may be set in a new light. The aim is that of orientation rather than prediction. Yet in so far as our present insight points toward predictions of a sort, we shall not hesitate to make them.

For those who view Christianity from the outside, and for some halfhearted or disgruntled members of the Christian family, Bible and Church are offensive subjects. A student writing an examination paper not long ago expressed the current secularist opinion when he declared that some are unwilling to recognize religious subjects in art, lest they be thought to be orthodox churchmen—and that would be an awful death to die. The point of view of those to whom this student is referring is manifestly that orthodox Christianity has no future, or at least that secularists will see to it that, so far as they are concerned, it shall have none; and such persons rarely discriminate between orthodox and liberal Christianity. For this point of view the Bible had best become the forgotten book; or, if read at all, it should be read as literature, not

as a source of moral or religious guidance; and the sooner the Church decays, the better.

This impatient, skeptical rejection of historical Christianity characterizes a great many people today; it is one point at which extremes meet and on which a cultured capitalist may agree fully with an antireligious Communist. But one who views the last two millenniums of humanity in anything like an historical perspective will see that the Bible and the Church have often been rejected and repudiated, yet have contained within themselves the sources of new life, and have not only survived the sentence of death which many an age has passed upon them, but have taken on new life and manifested new vigor after periods of the grossest neglect and decay. There were Dark Ages, and there came a Reformation. There was the corruption of the eighteenth-century England, and there came John Wesley. There was the breakdown of Greek philosophy and religion in a groping world, and there came Jesus Christ. History seems to support the faith that, in due time, God will meet the emergencies that confront us today and will confront us in the future.

Whatever happens, Bible and Church are bound up inextricably with the future of Christianity. The Bible is the soul and the Church is the body of Christianity. It is impossible for Christianity to survive without soul or without body. Without soul it would cease to be Christian; without body it would cease to exist at all. This does not mean that some particular interpretation of the Bible is essential; much less does it mean that the Church of the distant future will bear a close resemblance to the Church of today. It

means, rather, that Christianity is unthinkable without a living relation to the Bible; and that Christianity is so social in its essential spirit that it must express itself through a worshiping community of believers—a Church.

These statements about Bible and Church are pretty strong. Are they true? Let us first look into the future of the Bible.

The position of the Bible in the world today is an anomalous one. No book is more widely circulated, yet few books are read less attentively. It has been called the least read best seller, and rightly. Among the reasons often assigned for this condition, the archaic literary style of the Bible does not seem to be very important in keeping people away from reading it. If that were the secret, then people would also be kept away from Shakespeare, and they would flock to the reading of the translations of the Bible into modern speech. But the very people who listen to Shakespeare and read him are often most negligent of the Bible; and observation has not shown any great increase in Bible reading on account of the new translations.

If we ask among whom the Bible is now most widely read, we may come nearer to an understanding of the problem. There can be little doubt that there is more actual reading of the Bible among those Christians of traditional faith, commonly called fundamentalists, than among liberals and modernists. A literal view of the Bible requires closer attention to the Biblical text than does a freer interpretation. Along with this fact must be taken the other fact that there has been a widespread reaction away from fundamen-

talism among American Christians during the past half century. This reaction has gone so far that it has turned not only against the weaknesses of fundamentalism, but also against the best things in it, such as Bible study.

However unfortunate this swing of the pendulum may be, there is some ground for it. To read the Bible as a devoutly orthodox traditional believer is to receive definite light on one's duty in this world and one's hope for the future. The dogmas of fundamentalism are specific and can be grasped in their essentials by any reasonably intelligent Bible reader. But the Christian who has found himself forced to give up the literalistic presuppositions of traditional orthodoxy finds himself in a much more difficult situation. He finds beliefs held by Biblical writers which he, as a modern Christian, does not fully share. He finds himself compelled, as we say, "to pick and choose," a task that calls for nice discrimination and more thought than he is prepared to devote to it. The result is that many are perplexed by Bible reading; they do not know what to believe. They do not feel that they "get so much" from the Bible as from a good sermon or modern book. The result is that they neglect the Bible more and more and it becomes a dead letter for them.

A further factor enters in here to complicate the situation. It must be admitted that the results of the critical study of the Bible since the outset of the nineteenth century have not been interpreted and popularized as they should be. Perhaps the general principles of the modern view are fairly well known, but they have not been presented to the people in such a

form as to cause the new view to guide the actual reading of the Bible. The critical view has revealed the Old Testament and the New Testament as a growing life; it has shown that many Biblical statements, which are incredible if regarded literally as the inspired word of God, are readily understood as expressions of different stages of religious growth; it has explained the riddles of such books as Daniel and Revelation; it has shown the importance and spiritual greatness of neglected writers such as Amos and Hosea; it has added new, although nameless, personalities by showing the various writers who had a part in the history of the Pentateuch, and has contributed a second and even a third Isaiah, in spite of the protests of a Dwight L. Moody who complained that the people did not yet know that there was one Isaiah. Above all, the critical view has shown the kinship between the religious experience of the Biblical writers and the experiences of universal humanity. It has taken the Bible, so to speak, out of the hands of spiritual Fascism and authoritarianism, and put it into the hands of spiritual Democracy and liberalism. But it must be confessed that these and other values of the new view have not been properly mediated to the rank and file. To far too great an extent the actual reading of the Bible has been left to those who did not accept or understand the new view.

Another consideration has tended to alienate the modern Christian from his Bible. The machine age has affected every relation in life. The landscape, the roads, the kitchen, the nursery, the basement, and the yard have all assumed an utterly different aspect under the influence of the machine. In America, par-

ticularly, the tempo of life has been heightened until existence has become a perpetual rush. In contrast with all this, the civilization of ancient Palestine seems utterly remote and unreal. Even where mighty Egypt, Assyria, Babylonia, and Rome, or cultured Greece appear in the Biblical story, they do not seem to the busy twentieth-century American to have much bearing on his daily life. And so the Bible is set aside because it seems to deal with a culture irrelevant to our own.

An influence of a very different sort has contributed further to the neglect of the Bible. The rise of the study of religious education as a special branch of the science of education has had important consequences. One of them has been a demand that religious education shall lead to more satisfactory results in the actual training of character than it has of late been doing. This demand is sensible and wholesome. But it has carried with it the introduction into the Church School of methods and subject matter which have tended to diminish radically the time devoted to systematic instruction in the Bible. Not enough attention has been paid by religious educators recently to the basic importance of the Bible for the very existence of Christianity, nor to the possibilities of character training in a more Biblical curriculum. In any event, if the Bible is essential to Christianity, full use of the meager time allowed for instruction in the ordinary Church School is all too little to afford a basis for the handing on of the torch of Christianity to the next generation. It is well for educators to demand that we get away from the old, formal question-and-answer and memory-verse methods of Biblical teach-

ing. But it is not necessary to stop using the Bible because it has been misused.

When all is said and done, the neglect of the Bible is not wholly due to any of the causes that we have mentioned. It is, rather, both cause and effect—in a vicious circle—of a deeper phenomenon, namely, the decline of faith in our age. If faith is to arise again, if man is to regain his shaken confidence in God and in himself, the new day will come through a return to the sources of faith. A sincere and open-minded study of the Bible in our times might mean the birth of an undreamed-of Reformation.

If we look from the confused present toward the future of Christianity, we can make two affirmations about that future in the if-then form, of which we may be reasonably certain. The first is: *If* no Bible, *then* no Christianity. The second is: *If* Christianity, *then* the Bible. In other words, the future of Christianity and the future of the Bible stand or fall together. If one lives, the other lives; if one dies or is neglected, the other will not be long in dying. The problem of the Bible is of the utmost importance to the future of Christianity.

Christianity depends on the Bible as intimately and necessarily as Americanism depends on the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution. If the Declaration of Independence were lost or were no longer read, or if the Constitution were disregarded, and if the principles of both were forgotten, there might still be a country situated between Mexico and Canada, but the spirit which animated that country would not deserve the name of Americanism. That this is no idle dream is indicated by the fact that

many who appeal most eloquently to Americanism are persons to whom the spirit of the Declaration and of the Constitution (except in its military provisions) is something foreign. Similarly, if the Bible were to be lost or become forgotten, there might continue to be a social group that called itself by the Christian name, but Christ would mean even less to such Christianity than Americus Vespucius means to America today. Nothing would be known of what Christ taught or did, nothing of his secret of power. Just as America would be a hollow name without her roots in history and the ideals to which her history commits her, so Christianity would be a hollow name without roots in the Bible. It would be a contradiction in terms, a Christianity without Christ.

Does one not see here and there indications of what such a Christianity might be? Are there not churches which are social clubs or bands of intellectuals, in which Christianity no longer involves a knowledge of the Scriptures or any particular information about Jesus? In such churches, if the name of Christian is retained, it is but a synonym for whatever pleases the cultured taste of today, irrespective of the teachings of Jesus. Religion thus becomes the same as culture, now predominantly intellectual, now aesthetic, now moralistic. But the central meaning of Christ and of God his Father vanishes.

It is therefore futile to suppose that Christianity can be made acceptable to the modern world by dropping the Bible. Perhaps no one deliberately entertains such a purpose, but there are many unconscious and subtle influences leading in that direction. The very tolerance and kindliness which are among the

most worthy traits of the modern Christian cause him to emphasize what he has in common with Jew and Mohammedan, Hindu and Buddhist, and to pass over what is peculiar to Christianity. Philosophy of religion, with its universal interest, tends toward the same result. A comparison of such philosophers as Kant and Hegel with philosophers of religion today will show that the older writers made far more Biblical allusions than most of the recent ones do.

This situation is serious. But far more serious for the future is the fact that there are many educated people who are willing to let the Bible go and let Christianity go with it. A Christian leader of international fame has recently stated that for the immense majority of modern men the central Christian affirmations have lost all meaning. For them, accordingly, the whole realm of thought and experience represented in the Bible is irrelevant. It would, in their opinion, be gain rather than loss if Christianity were to perish entirely from the earth. They attach no importance to the fact that so much of our literature, art, music, and moral idealism has grown up in connection with Christianity. They assume, without sufficient reason, that values as good or better would have been produced by humanity without the stimulus of Christian faith, and that justice and benevolence may prevail in the future without the aid of religion. Such speculations are fantastic in the extreme. The world has never produced a culture without a religion. Even Communism is no exception to this rule. If culture is always associated with religion, and if Christianity is, as faith affirms, the highest of the religions, it would be an irresponsible blow to culture to try to

eradicate Christianity from it. It would be an attack on its very life-center. One can understand why a nationalistic or materialistic government might wish to crush an essentially international and idealistic religion like Christianity. One cannot so readily understand why individuals whose education has derived its very being from Christian influences should fail to perceive the magnitude of the calamity that would follow from the downfall of Christianity.

Nevertheless, the fact stands out that the foundation of Christian faith in the Bible is seriously neglected both by believers and by unbelievers. Even highly educated Christians are often unaware of the peril to civilization that is involved. It may be argued that the Bible has not done a great deal to tame savage human nature; that Christianity has even produced Crusades and religious wars; and that the Church, with Bible in hand, has blessed national wars and has done relatively little to better the condition of the poor or to restrain the rapacity of the exploiting rich. Granting all this and more, a realistic student of human nature will not complain because the Bible has failed to exert a magical influence over man, but, rather, will ask what history would have been without the guiding and inspiring influence of the Christian book. Christianity offers no sweetly optimistic view of human nature or history. The Bible fully recognizes the sinful nature of man and the painful struggles that are necessary on both the divine and the human side before salvation is attained. Those who condemn the Bible on the ground of the imperfections in Christian history are suffering from the illusions of unwarranted optimism. Let them ask

what the past twenty centuries would have been if Christ, the Prince of Peace, had been unknown to men. Wise critics of our times perceive that what we need is more, not less, of the idealistic and restraining influence of religious faith.

We are, then, looking into the future at a time of religious crisis. Our situation will be more intelligible if we consider exactly what the new view of the Bible is, since it plays so large a part in the crisis. Let us try to define it both scientifically and religiously. Scientifically, the modern view means that the Bible is to be studied by exactly the same methods of research as guide the investigation of any other historical document. Its claims are treated as impartially as are the claims made in behalf of Isis and Osiris in the Egyptian literature. Its historical references are compared with those in other literatures, in inscriptions, and archaeological remains. The most rigid tests are applied in the attempt to discover the authorship and date of composition of every part of every book of the Bible. A comparison of the four Gospels with each other, for instance, shows at once that Matthew, Mark, and Luke belong together and that John is later and relatively independent, although evidently based on a knowledge of the three earlier Synoptics. More instructive is the light shed by the relations of Matthew and Luke to Mark. It is clear that the latter is used as a source by the two former. A study of the selection and redistribution of the materials of Mark by Matthew and Luke reveals much about the methods of ancient writers, as does the prologue of Luke's Gospel, with its statement that the author had traced the course of all things accu-

rately from the beginning. It is interesting that a second-century writer named Tatian wove together materials from all our Gospels into a continuous narrative called the *Diatessaron,* which circulated for some time as the gospel in the Syrian Church. If it had come to be generally accepted as authoritative, our Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John would possibly have disappeared, and the problem of determining the sources and the authenticity of the material in Tatian's work would have been much more serious than it now is. It is the view of modern scholars that something of that very sort happened in the case of our Pentateuch, so that the present Pentateuch (with Joshua and part of Judges) is, like Tatian's *Diatessaron,* a weaving together of older works, which no longer exist separately. One of the great achievements of modern Biblical scholarship is the analysis of the Pentateuch and the almost complete restoration of the original documents which the latest editor, analogous to Tatian, used. These illustrations may suffice to indicate something of the nature of the modern view of the Bible on its scientific side. It represents a shift from a literal to a critical and evolutionary standpoint.

What is the future of the scientific study of the Bible? The textual study and analysis which has produced so many brilliant results has gone about as far as it can go. What remains is of two sorts: first, further study of the relations between the Biblical religion and the religions of the surrounding and previous civilizations, and, secondly, archaeological investigations particularly in Palestine itself. If some day the shovel should excavate even a small portion of an Old Testa-

ment writing as it was first written down and read by contemporaries, a flood of light would be shed on the theories which scholars have built up. It seems fair to predict that, as long as civilization continues, the scientific study of the Bible will continue. The change in the spiritual climate which has been introduced by the so-called Higher Criticism is a permanent one, subject to modifications in detail, but not in principle. But the most complete scientific study of the Scriptures falls far short of answering the simplest religious questions. The historical and critical method has taught religious believers to distinguish more clearly between the literal and the mythical and allegorical in the Biblical narratives. It has helped clear away much of the rubbish attendant on religious belief, and has revealed more clearly the spiritual development in Biblical history. Yet it has not contributed toward a solution of man's fundamental religious problem: Is there a God whom I can trust now and for all the future? The scientific change has neither added to nor taken from our fundamental religious knowledge of the future.

On its religious side, the change may be described as being from a dogmatic to a functional view of revelation. The old view of revelation was dogmatic; that is, it represented God as revealing to man a series of truths, each truth to be treated as a dogma, until the final and complete truth is revealed in Christ and his apostles. The new view may be called functional; that is, it regards the beliefs of the Biblical writers not primarily as dogmas, but, rather, as means by which men were led nearer to God, or as powers which function in achieving the divine purposes. Accord-

ing to the dogmatic theory, the supremely important aim of revelation is correct theological knowledge and a life in conformity thereto. According to the functional theory, the supremely important aim of revelation is the movement of life in the direction of the divine plan.

The older, dogmatic view has certain undeniable advantages. It is definite. One knows what to believe, what to reject. It is authoritative. It purports to be absolute truth divinely communicated to man. But its disadvantages outweigh its advantages. The human mind is so constituted that it receives nothing from without which it does not interpret in the light of its own knowledge and previous experience. Hence, unless one supposes that God overrides human psychology entirely, any possible revelation which man receives must not only be within the limits of his understanding, but must be received as he understands it in the light of his experience as a whole. Even in the observation of everyday facts, and in ordinary human conversation, errors and misunderstandings easily slip in. But when ideas and purposes which transcend the limits of any previous experience are suggested to a human mind by the Divine Spirit, how much more inevitable it is that the divine purpose be incompletely understood! A view which ties religious faith permanently to all of the precise beliefs stated in the Bible is a view which, while recognizing the presence of divine purpose in revelation, goes so far as to exalt the human interpretation of God to a place on an equality with God's own plan for the world. The dogmatic view thus leads to contradictions and tends to close the mind against new truth.

On the other hand, as we have already seen, the newer, functional view also suffers from disadvantages. It is less simple and definite than the "Thus saith the Lord." It is built partly on the foundation of the critical view of the Bible, a view which is rather complicated and is not widely known. In fact, thus far a clear grasp on the newer view is largely confined to a few thousand leaders who write books and articles about each others' views, read the books and articles written by members of their group, and talk a language more or less incomprehensible to the common man. But these disadvantages, serious as they are at present, are far outweighed by the advantages of the view. The disadvantages are not fundamental religious defects, like the disadvantages of the dogmatic view. They are practical, educational difficulties which can be overcome in the course of time. When we consider how relatively simple it has apparently been to teach a whole generation in Russia, in Germany, or in Italy a radically new philosophy of life, based on many technical and complicated arguments, it would be folly to say that Christendom cannot be taught a new conception of revelation merely because that conception happens to be somewhat more complicated than the older one or because it is at present confined to a relatively small group to whom the masses are now more or less indifferent. What we have here is a transition stage, not the end of a movement.

The positive advantages of the newer view are very great. In the first place, it is less rationalistic and more practical than the old view. The old view was once estimated by the great Marburg theologian, Wil-

helm Herrmann, in the phrase, "Orthodoxy is too rationalistic." That is, it required as a prerequisite to being a Christian, the acceptance of all the traditional dogmas as revealed in the Bible and interpreted by the Church. This put a premium on intellectual knowledge. It is easy to see why Herrmann called it too rationalistic. The new, functional view is less rationalistic and is more in harmony with the teaching of Jesus, "By their fruits ye shall know them." It rests on the principle that a life may be moving toward God and be co-operating with his plan even though it possesses a very imperfect idea of God. The fundamental test here is not the rationalistic one: Is this idea absolutely true? but the functional one: Does this idea lead life toward God? No idea, of course, can lead on to God if one doesn't sincerely believe the idea to be true; and the more truth humanity can achieve, the better. But the new view is a religious liberation in that it does not postpone religious experience until that distant day when all intellectual problems shall have been solved and all sound doctrines firmly established by a new Saint Thomas or John Calvin. It means that a soul seeking God, whether long ago in Biblical times or today under modern conditions, can find him without waiting for the theologians and philosophers to settle all their disputes. Religion is essentially practical, and the functional view brings this out as the dogmatic view did not. The message of the older view is essentially: Accept the revealed doctrines, act on them, and be saved. The message of the newer view is: Accept the best that you can see, act on it, and be saved. As a matter of fact, on either view a human being is neces-

sarily subject to some admixture of human error. But on the older view such an admixture is fatal, while on the newer view it is not. Furthermore, the functional view is more open to new truth, new influences from God, new revelation, than the old. It faces the future with greater hope and is not restricted, for instance, to the literal picture of the "end of the age" given in the New Testament. That was one view of the future, determined by the hopes and struggles of the first century; today the newer view is looking to the future with a greater desire to learn God's will for our own times than it would have if it supposed that every war was a signal for the coming Day of Judgment.

What, then, is the future of the Bible? Toward what goals should the farsighted Christian aim? The answers proposed to these questions are offered in no spirit of finality. They are suggestions which can never be fully confirmed or refuted until the future comes; but they may serve as guides to some in reaching toward that future.

The Bible will be of permanent value as long as there is any religious faith on the earth. If we cannot find God in the experiences of the prophets and the apostles, and supremely in the life of Jesus, we cannot find God at all. This does not mean that God is to be found only in the Bible. The God of the Bible is the God of all men and all history, and the clear implication of the newer view of revelation is that God may be found anywhere, within or without the Christian tradition, by anyone who seeks him. But experience shows that there are widely varying levels of religious experience, and that the highest levels have been accessible to more people through the Bible than

through any other literature. So true is this that we may venture the prediction that if humanity reaches a stage in which it cannot find spiritual sustenance in the Bible, it will have moved so far away from spiritual receptivity that it will no longer find God, turn where it may. But our fundamental faith in the goodness and power of God will not allow any such assumption. We therefore face the future confident that through the Bible man will continue to perceive his vital relation to the living past, and will continue to discover the eternal in the temporal. A book that has brought eternal values to every age of history since it was written and to every age of men has a future as glorious as its past has been.

On the basis of this faith for the future we may set at least three definite goals for the revival of religion. The first is a renaissance of Bible reading both among the rank and file of Christians and in colleges. There was in the days before the War a remarkable episode known as the fraternity Bible-class movement. In many colleges a large proportion of the fraternities organized groups for reading and discussing the Bible. The fraternities of that time were no more predisposed to religion or Bible than they are today, yet they responded with surprising interest over a period of ten or a dozen years. The recent appearance of an edition of the Bible as literature on the lists of nonfiction best sellers may have very little religious significance, but it is a testimony to the perennial and many-sided appeal of the Bible even to an irreligious age. But the Bible will not be a source of new life until it is read more diligently than any ordinary best seller which is a fad for a few weeks

or months and is then set aside to be forgotten. What is duller than an outmoded best seller? The secret of the Bible is that it can never be outmoded. The first goal, then, is more reading of the Bible. The second goal is the education of fundamentalists to be more scientific and of modernists to be more religious. Perhaps the chief barrier to the spread of the newer view has been the fact that so many of its advocates have lacked spiritual depth and religious sympathy, in part because they may have unconsciously tried to substitute science for religion. But until both groups of Christians learn to supplement their weakness, the influence of the Bible will fall short of what it should be. The third goal is the abandonment of literalism and the treatment of the Bible historically as a source book and religiously as a laboratory manual. Unfortunately, the Bible has been treated too much as a book of theoretical truths. If it can come to be treated as a laboratory manual, then its principles will cease to be taken as dogmatic authority, but they will come to have the authority of experimental testing, like the principles of science. When one reads the Bible carefully, it is surprising to find how large a proportion of its teaching concerns things to do, and to how great an extent belief is connected with life. To treat the Bible as a laboratory manual is closer to the intention of those early Christians who called their faith "The Way," than it would be to treat it as first and foremost a manual of doctrine. It is safe to assume that if these goals are approached, the Christianity of the future will be more liberal and more effective than the Christianity of the present.

The alternative to a continued recognition of the

Bible as an essential source of religious life for ages to come is, obviously, to regard it as unessential, and eventually to disregard it altogether. It is true that the most complete neglect of the Bible could not wholly eradicate the influence which it has already had on civilization. It would take centuries before the influence of Christ could die out entirely. But the end of the Sermon on the Mount and of the redeeming influence of Calvary might well be a new barbarism, which would be all the more cruel and destructive if it retained scientific knowledge without religious ideals.

The decision of an individual or a society about its attitude toward the Bible is at the same time a decision about the future of that individual or society. *If* no Bible, *then* no Christian civilization. Faith allows us to add the affirmation: But the Bible will live, and Christian civilization will triumph, little as we can see the course of coming events, and great as may be present and future difficulties.

Earlier, attention was called to the principle that if the Bible is the soul, the Church is the body of Christianity—or, as Saint Paul said, the body of Christ. Thus far we have been considering the future of the soul apart from that of the body. But the two are inextricably intertwined, and our view of the future of Christianity will remain abstract if we do not consider also the future of the Church. To that problem we now turn our attention.

The problem of the future of the Church is more serious than that of the Bible. After all, whatever view we take of the Bible, it is a complete and relatively unified whole, with all its variety. Further-

more, it is capable of winning its own way. By its sincerity and power it wins universal respect and reverence, even from those who reject its teachings. Not so the Church. Far from being a complete and unified whole it is divided in organization and in deed. Contemporary society does not look on it—or at least on the Protestant Church—as worthy of great respect. In many quarters it is regarded as a negligible force in human affairs. The crisis of the Church is illustrated by a conversation that recently took place between two distinguished leaders of international Protestantism—one British and the other German. The Briton said, "The fundamental tension of my life is caused by the fact that the only hope of civilization is the Church, and I despair of the Church." And the German answered that those words were the exact expression of his own experience too.

Nevertheless, despite the seriousness of the problem of the Church, it would be a mistake to regard the Church as of more importance than the Bible. On the contrary, the Bible is more fundamental than the Church. If the Bible is abandoned, Christianity is done for. God, it is true, would not then be defeated, but he would have to start all over again with some new program for the redemption of the world, and the spiritual advance of humanity would be delayed for ages upon ages. On the other hand, if the Church is abandoned, Christianity might very well survive notwithstanding. It is true that the decay and death of an ancient and deep-rooted institution like the Church would be attended by radical social and spiritual disasters. But no matter what happened to the Church as an institution, as long as the Bible survived

the historical source of Christian knowledge and life would survive. If the Church perished, the Bible would soon produce a new Church; and if parts of the Church today sometimes actually die spiritually, the Bible raises up new members with a new vision of vital Christianity. The Christ of the New Testament is the source of the life of the Church, so that the Church depends upon the Bible more than the Bible upon the Church. Where the spark of true religion lives, there a social flame will burn. Religion is inherently social, and it is bound to find itself some form of social expression.

Some form of social expression. Yes. But what form? And how related to the Church as it exists today? That is the problem which confronts us. If we are to answer it at all realistically, we must face the situation as it actually exists. Yet it is no simple matter to discover the facts about the situation. Statistics are singularly unenlightening, for what we want to know is nothing primarily quantitative; what concerns us is not how many individuals or dollars belong to the Church, but what kind of spirit prevails and what tokens for the future may be found in that spirit. When it comes to discovering the spirit of a great international institution, or family of institutions, one confronts a baffling task. There is no scientific method by which it can be established with certainty. All that one can do is to read, observe, and inquire among responsible leaders. This I have done, and what I shall present here is my report. I shall give first the chief grounds for discouragement about the future of the Church, then the grounds for encouragement, and then draw some conclusions.

Among the grounds for discouragement is the widespread belief that the Church is experiencing a period of spiritual decline. In a very blunt passage in his *Adventures of Ideas,* Professor Alfred North Whitehead, the dean of Anglo-American philosophy, says (p. 205):

> Protestant Christianity, so far as concerns the institutional and dogmatic forms in which it flourished for three hundred years as derived from Luther, Calvin, and the Anglican Settlement, is shewing all the signs of a steady decay. Its dogmas no longer dominate: its divisions no longer interest: its institutions no longer direct the patterns of life.

Steady decay! These are hard words. Yet if we consider that the Great Depression through which the world has passed since 1929 is the first such experience in modern history not to be accompanied by a religious revival, we have concrete evidence of some sort of enfeeblement. Such also do we find in the fact that the Oxford Group Movement, one of the few recent signs of spiritual vitality, was a movement more or less independent of the Church as an institution. The decline of support for foreign missions and confusion about its aims, together with the decline of religious education, are grave causes for concern. Not everyone may lament the passing of the prayer meeting; but the fact remains that that institution was almost the sole organ for the social cultivation of the devotional life, and that it has disappeared from many churches entirely with nothing to take its place. Successful churches too often are characterized by activities and amusements rather than by a sense of the spiritual mission of the Church to the individual and

to society. We may perhaps date the acceleration of decline in spirituality from the beginning of the World War. That is to say, when the world most urgently needed a strong spiritual message, that message was most conspicuously absent.

A second ground for discouragement lies in the failure of the Church to face with sufficient frankness and energy the indifference of the world to sect and creed. The Church has concerned itself chiefly with its domestic problems, its internal politics, its financial difficulties, and its many worthy enterprises; it has not really faced the problem of the unchurched masses or of the alienation of the cultured classes from church life. It has been too anxious to save itself and not sufficiently willing to pay the price of service to humanity. This is evidenced by the customary sensitiveness of the Church to criticism. Whenever such criticism is published in book or article, we may observe many more refutations of the criticism by leaders of the Church than attempts to remedy the condition which gives rise to the criticism. Granting that much criticism is ill-informed and unfair, it remains true that one of the marks of a strong institution, as of a strong personality, is the ability to take criticism, not resenting unjust criticism, and profiting by just criticism.

A third ground for discouragement, to which allusion has already been made, is the gulf between the scholarly leadership and the great masses of the members. In the nature of the case, a certain gulf must always exist between the learned and the unlearned. But in the past it has frequently been bridged by the respect which the laity has felt for their scholarly

leaders—such respect as is expressed in Browning's poem, "A Grammarian's Funeral." At present, however, for various reasons this respect seems to be diminishing. Among Protestant scholars there is no great agreement about religious truth or its applications. But this is an age in which people feel the pressure of life perhaps more sensitively than ever before and in which social security appears to be more seriously threatened than for a long time. Accordingly, the average man looks to the scholar for help, and the scholar too often fails him. No one can attend a meeting of leading theologians and hear their discussions without knowing how sharply they differ from one another and how confused their councils are. A Scottish divine a few years ago was invited to attend such a gathering on his arrival in New York. Having listened to the theological debates, he was called upon to speak. What he said was about as follows: "As I have crossed the Atlantic, my body has been subjected to many buffetings, but the buffetings which my body has suffered are as nothing to those which my soul has endured in these discussions. If they represent religious thought in America, then Christianity is certainly in a state of decline." The impression made on the Scottish divine is not unlike the impression which theologians make on Walter Lippmann, or on the average layman. This chaos is part of the price we have to pay for living in a transition era.

A fourth ground for discouragement is the failure of the Church to arrive at a clear conception of its social responsibility. This is true even with reference to situations within the Church itself. For example, one of the most perplexing problems of the present

time is that of the rapid decline of the rural church. Until recently the rural church has been the backbone of Protestantism, the source of much of its leadership, and the feeder for urban churches. Changing conditions in the country have now created a crisis for the rural church. The facts are well known to every leader in the Church, but no program adequate to the need has been developed. If one looks at the larger social problems affecting society as a whole, the situation is much the same. Everyone knows that our economic system is somehow out of joint and that its maladjustments lead to human misery on a large scale. Everyone knows that spiritual life corresponding to the ideals set forth by the Church is practically unattainable and all but inconceivable for millions of the victims of the economic order. Yet the Church has no clear idea of her responsibility under these circumstances. There is nearly as much difference of opinion on social fundamentals within the Church as there is without. If a group arises moved by what they believe to be a Christian social conscience and proclaims a prophetic message directed against the major social sins of our order, it is sure that another group will arise to assert that the Church has no right to assume leadership in social and economic questions and that it should confine its efforts to the saving of individuals. A Church so divided may easily become a negligible influence on society. If there were genuine agreement on even a few great questions, such as war or child labor or the principle of the labor union, the Church might accomplish much by its spiritual authority supplemented by sheer force of numbers. As it is, perplexity reigns.

One more ground for discouragement may suffice for this side of the picture. I refer to the worldliness of the Church. A distinguished Negro leader has recently expressed his grief over the fact that the standards of success in the Church seem to be much the same as those in the world. He added that he saw an increasing tendency away from humble places of service to places of power. He might well have called attention to what is known as ecclesiastical politics, some of which is doubtless necessary and inevitable, and some irreconcilable with spiritual ideals. Worldliness is often present in the social atmosphere of a church, to so great an extent that in many a Protestant church worshipers of the laboring class or of other races than the white cannot feel at home. Worldliness is manifested, to quote the Negro leader again, in the condescension with which the white Christian treats the Negro.

Over against the discouraging factors in the life of the Church there are numerous grounds for encouragement about the future. First of all, there is the encouragement that comes from historical perspective. Let us take all of the reasons for discouragement which have been mentioned and add to them whatever items may have been overlooked; great as the total mass of discouragement may be, in the light of historical perspective it becomes much less important than it appears to us as we confront it today. This becomes evident if we compare the present state of the Church with the conditions which John Wesley confronted in the eighteenth century, or Martin Luther in the sixteenth, or Jesus in the first. As compared with the unspirituality and the abuses which they found in the

Church of their day, the evils in the modern Church are relatively slight. Not only is the evil of today less evil, but also the good is better. That is, there are more of the clergy and laity who are deeply concerned about the state of affairs than the records show in past crises; and there are more voices raised and efforts made than in the past. If the justified criticisms of the Church are very open and abundant, it is partly because our standards have become higher. Further, we have become impatient. We have seen the amazing tempo of material progress based on the achievement of science, and we expect to see moral and religious progress advance at a corresponding rate. The slowness of spiritual growth as compared with the speed of material has disappointed us. But historical perspective teaches us that material prosperity is no guarantee of permanence, and that the slowly developing spiritual life embodies the eternal values which alone give meaning to material civilization. In the light of these lessons from the past, we can face the worst facts of the present knowing that still worse problems than we confront have been solved before our time; and confident that, even if the solution is not evident in our own lifetime, our efforts to build a better Church in a better world will all count for the future. Anyone with the slightest religious faith must perceive that his faith cannot expect complete verification and success at any moment of present time, for faith, defined as the substance (or assurance) of things hoped for, always points beyond every present to an infinite future. The lesson of historical perspective for faith is that God has always furnished man the resources needed for the restoration of spir-

itual life whenever it has become weak and apparently powerless. From this fact faith may gain assurance of hope for the future.

A second ground for encouragement is the increased interest in union or co-operation among the Churches. One need only point to the United Church in Canada, the union of Congregational bodies in this country, and the movement toward Methodist union, not to mention hopes for a much more inclusive unity than has yet been accomplished. It is true that steps toward Church union are almost always accompanied by certain compromises and temporary losses. But the gains seem to be greater than the losses. Every step toward the elimination of unchristian rivalry and competition, and toward the development of a basis for common Christian action on a united front is a clear gain for a better future.

Movements for co-operation are perhaps fully as significant as the movements for union. In the latter the factor of political compromise is sometimes too evident, whereas in the former the cause itself is in the immediate foreground. The Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America offers conspicuous leadership. The Student Christian Movement has long been a leaven at work in the colleges and universities. It has always been interdenominational, international, and interracial in its outlook and has aimed to lead students to practical applications of Christianity. Of late it has been developing an even higher degree of organized co-operation among all the Christian forces on the campus. No one can come into contact with this movement without being conscious that Christianity is very much alive today and is looking

toward a new tomorrow. Another form of hopeful co-operation is the recent joint activity of Jews, Catholics, and Protestants. It must be admitted that this movement is not on a very large scale and that it can hardly expect to lead to any corporate unity in the three faiths concerned. But it is most encouraging that the movement exists at all, and that Jews, Catholics, and Protestants are beginning to recognize how much they owe to each other, how much they have in common, and how much room there is for difference within the general limits of a common spiritual purpose and heritage. Still more inclusive movements, such as the Fellowship of Faiths, which aim to bring together representatives of all of the religions of the world for mutual understanding and appreciation, also serve to broaden and deepen the spiritual life of the Church, provided they guard against a thin eclectic compromise that makes every faith anemic.

Of all the movements for Christian co-operation the one which is most noteworthy at the present time is perhaps the Universal Christian Council. The work in which that body is now engaged is unprecedented in the history of Christianity. Under the leadership of Dr. J. H. Oldham a world-wide organization, with headquarters in Geneva and London, is engaged in a broad study of the relations of Church, Community, and State. The methods used are original and striking. A Swiss scholar, let us say, is asked to write on some subject such as the Christian doctrine of man. His paper is mimeographed and is sent out to Christian scholars in Germany, France, Holland, England, America, and other countries. Between 50 and 100 copies will be thus distributed. Each reader to whom

it is sent will write a frank and searching criticism of it. Copies of the criticism are given not only to the original writer but also to the other readers. As a result of the first round of criticisms the author will revise his first draft. This process may go on for two or three revisions. All of the papers are confidential in the sense that they are not to be published until a final form is reached that has passed through the fire of international criticism and represents the most adequate and intelligible work of which the author is capable. The contributors and readers represent all branches of Protestantism and widely divergent theological and philosophical points of view. The lively and intimate interchange of thought which has thus been going on for the past two or three years under the Universal Christian Council is not only a sign of co-operative good will on the part of Christian leaders, but also betokens the intellectual seriousness with which Christendom is facing the present age and preparing for the future.

A third ground for encouragement is the freedom with which criticism comes to expression. A Church or a society which suppresses freedom is sowing the seeds of its own inner decay. A Church or a society which encourages freedom is giving opportunity to the forces that make for future life and growth. There have been times in the history of the Church when critical voices were stilled and difference of opinion was forbidden. Then the Church had the strength which comes from agreement, but it was forced agreement. At present we have the strength that comes from free difference. It may be that we may expect the day when Christianity shall gain the kind of

strength which science has and which comes from free agreement. But the present is an age of criticism. Some of the utterances of the Federal Council, to which allusion has already been made, are a prophetic self-criticism of the Church, and a sign of real hope for the future. There are journals that serve as Socratic gadflies to the Christian community. Their columns are free forums and their voices are often raised in a manner not pleasing to all, but they fulfill the function of free criticism and keep alive the spirit of prophetic search for better and more Christian ways of thinking and living.

It may seem paradoxical to mention as a fourth ground for encouragement the interest of the Church in social problems, after having assigned as a ground for discouragement the failure of the Church to arrive at a clear conception of its social responsibility. But the encouraging fact is that this failure is not wholly due to indifference; it is at least partly caused by intensity of interest in social questions so deep and many-sided that thus far it has led chiefly to disagreements. Yet if Christianity is a religion that attaches supreme importance to the soul, the Christian Church cannot perpetually avoid the questions: What effect does the social order have on the souls of its members? and, Would a better social order be more favorable to the life of the soul? These questions are being faced by many groups within the Christian Church today.

Four instances of this social interest may be given from current Christian history. A committee of the Federal Council of Churches, under the chairmanship of Dr. Albert W. Beaven, has prepared a report on "The State of the Church" to offer guiding principles

for the next two years of the Council's work.[1] This report begins and ends on a social note. It speaks at the outset of "the Church's deep entanglement with the life of a society many of whose forms and habits of mind are destined to pass away." It closes with an appeal to the Church "to disentangle itself from various forms and habits of mind characteristic of our present society, that it may take hold of the moral and spiritual issues of that society with greater sincerity and power." The report is fully alert to the contrast between the "comfortable middle class" lives of most church members and the "very humble circumstances" of the great majority of Americans. Attention is called to the estimate of the Brookings Institution that in 1929 sixty per cent of our families had an income of less than $2,000. The whole report is worthy of careful reading as a document of social insight and as evidence that the leaders of the Church are alive to the problems. A second instance of social interest is the impulse that has come from the mission field through such men as Kagawa and E. Stanley Jones. They see the moral evils in our present order of society, but also see, more plainly than we in America do, the power, the merits, and the dangers of Communism. They are seeking to awaken the social conscience of the Church to frame a social program before it is too late. Kagawa's interpretation of co-operatives has caught the imagination of many in the Church; it is one means toward a more just distribution of goods.

A third example of the social interest of the Church

[1] See *The Christian Century*, December 30, 1936, for the full report.

is the heroic resistance of a large group in the German Church to tendencies and policies which they regard as pagan. Many had supposed that the German Church was half dead and was concerned only with ancient theological formulas. But when it was challenged by attempts on the part of society to take away its spiritual freedom, it was galvanized into life. Germany has seen men imprisoned and suffering for their faith. In such a world the Christian Church can ill afford to lose sight of her social mission. That she has not done so is encouraging.

The Emergency Peace Campaign is a fourth example of the social interest of the Church. The Campaign is not, it is true, a strictly ecclesiastical one, but it has been largely fostered and supported by the churches and their members. It shows that the Christian public is becoming genuinely aroused about national and international policies which lead to war, and is a further proof that the Church is beginning to perceive that it cannot evade its share in responsibility for the social situation.

A fifth ground for encouragement is the fact that there appears to be a general desire on the part of leaders to think things through in a fresh and honest way. There is little smug satisfaction with the old ruts. Evidence of the desire to face fundamentals is found in the report of the Laymen's Foreign Missions Inquiry, *Rethinking Missions,* which has aroused so much discussion, and in the new Movement for World Christianity which has grown out of it. There is still lacking a common faith and a common program. But a Christianity which can harbor both humanists and Barthians at the same time is giving proof of a lively

intellectual curiosity and a many-sided search for truth. Out of the variety of independent thought going on at the present time there should arise new insights to guide the future.

In the light of the discouragements and encouragements of the present, what shall we say of the future of the Church? If we follow the guidance of historical perspective, it seems safe to predict that many changes will occur, changes that to some will probably seem to be fatal. But that same perspective leads also to the faith that Christianity itself will endure as long as humanity endures. The Bible will always be read, and the soul of Christianity will always build for itself a body. There will always be a Church. Christianity will survive, and as surely as it survives, it will survive as an institution. Its social spirit forbids its ever becoming a purely private enjoyment of God or of religious culture. Its human value and its divine origin forbid the supposition that it can ever be crushed out by either a Stalin or a Rosenberg.

Some tentative predictions about the Church of the future may be ventured. It must have a more philosophical theology than fundamentalism and a more definite theology than modernism. It must reach beyond the present free criticism and search for fundamentals to a faith that is clearer and more unified than at present. It must deepen its doctrinal thought while simplifying its doctrinal requirements. As we have seen, it must be more intelligently Biblical. And it must also become more clearly aware of its social mission.

The form of church activity will have to change radically. The Church is a worshiping community

and a teaching community, and it will lose its usefulness if it does not concentrate on these two functions of worship and education. It may be that the Church of the future will express itself architecturally through two buildings—a temple and a school. The present multiplicity of irrelevant entertainments, which compete, often unsuccessfully because less brilliantly, with commercialized amusements, will gradually drop away if the Church is to fulfill her mission in the world.

Furthermore, the form of church organization must change. The movement for church union will transform the present denominations. It is reasonable to hope that the leaders of the new united Church will have learned from past experience the dangers of a compulsory orthodoxy, whether conservative or liberal, and that they will seek a unity of the spirit rather than a regimented unity. It may be that the spiritual ideals of the Church of the future will alienate those who have been held to the Church by sectarian loyalties, family ties, or the nonreligious activities to which allusion was made. A more vital Church with a smaller membership will not be an unmixed evil. I share with the committee on The State of the Church the conviction that "in the providence of God a smaller church may be a necessity if mankind is to be leavened by an earnest movement of the Spirit." The aim of church union is not statistical or numerical. The only aim which justifies it is religious idealism; and religious idealism must be bought with a price. If, then, the forward movement of the Christian Church in the future is accompanied by numerical decrease, this would be no reason for distress—

provided the decrease were due to the higher and more spiritual standards for membership and provided the Church with fewer members did not tend to become a spiritual aristocracy, but remained mindful of its democratic mission to the whole of society.

The future is bound to see the world becoming smaller and smaller. However intensely the present spirit of nationalism may be developed, it is impossible that the great nations of the world shall become wholly isolated from each other. Whether in peace or in war, they are inextricably connected by economic and cultural bonds. Just as science knows no frontier, so religion. Hence the Church of the future will be international, if not in unity of organization, certainly in unity of spirit.

But the internationalism of the Christian Church will be bound to create problems. Problems will obviously continue to arise from the conflict with nationalism, and there may be many new martyrdoms in the future history of the Church. The problems to which I desire to call special attention, however, concern the relations of Christianity to other religions rather than to nationalism. Mention has been made of the good will that is beginning to spring up among men of different faiths. This movement will grow. The Church of the future will, I believe, learn to be less partisan in its relation to other faiths. The treatment of Jews by Christians and of Protestants and Catholics by each other is nothing less than scandalous. In New York City and in Germany (before Hitler too) the word "Christian" in a newspaper often does not mean a follower of Christ, animated by his spirit. It means instead, merely, one who is not a Jew. A

Protestant religious journal has recently treated seriously the question whether a Catholic is a Christian; the answer was affirmative, but the question was treated as debatable. In the Church of the future all this will be impossible. A spirit of universal love and generosity will overcome all differences. And this will be true not merely in the relations of the Protestant Church to its spiritual kindred of the Jewish and Catholic Churches, but it will also be true of its relations to other religions. The Christian Church will come to recognize in Buddhism and Hinduism, Confucianism and Mohammedanism, other roads to God. The Christian will treat representatives of these religions as brothers, not as heathen enemies of the faith. If Christians have a higher truth than these other religions, as their faith leads them to believe, that superiority cannot be shown by a spirit of partisanship or arrogance. Mohammedans can teach Christians lessons in tolerance, for they never pronounce the name of Jesus without saying, "Blessed be his name." Buddhists can teach Christians lessons in spiritual calm and conquest of desire. Hindus can teach Christians mystical fellowship with the Divine. Confucianists can teach social responsibility. A relation of friendly and mutual interchange of spiritual values of this sort might go far toward bringing the whole world nearer to God. Religion ought to be the greatest of forces for world unity and world peace, but the rivalries and animosities among religious believers have often made it a source of war. The future will see the Church moving away from partisanship toward a true brotherhood of man.

Yet at the same time while the Church of the future

is becoming less partisan in its attitude toward other religions, it will be becoming more propagandist in the best sense of a much-abused word. The common cause of all religion is not merely that of friendliness among the religious, but it is also that of hostility to practical and theoretical materialism, secularism, and sin. A Church that lacks the aggressive missionary spirit is doomed to death. A Church that is apologetic and seeks to prove that there is no essential difference between its faith and the point of view of the world is a Church that has confessed that it has no message and no mission. The living Church of the future must, therefore, be a Congregation for the Propaganda of the Faith. It will be the task of the Church to break down the supercilious, ignorant, polite aloofness with which the cultured now treat it; to prove by its social action to the workers that it does not merit the disdain in which they now hold it; to show to the learned scientist that faith has no word of hostility to science, but that it offers an interpretation of the values of life which science has neglected.

Above all, the Church of the future will be in a truer and more fundamental sense the Church of Christ. The towering figure of Christ will always be the Leader of the Church. To be a Christian will be defined more simply as being a follower of Christ. If this simple test were to be made the sole ground of membership in a Christian Church, some would feel that a dangerous liberalism was at work. But perhaps the Church of the future will trust Christ and his followers more generously than the rigidly doctrinal Church of the past has done. Such a Church will live because it is not living for itself alone; un-

like the Church of the present, its aim will not be the preservation of itself as an organization, but, rather, the realization of the Kingdom of God. It would prefer to perish as an organization, in order that the Kingdom of God might live, rather than to flourish while the Kingdom of God fades and withers. Only a Church that is willing to die is worthy to live; and such, I dare predict, the Church of the future will be.

CHAPTER III

THE FUTURE OF GOD

THUS far we have considered the general principles underlying our thought about the future and have applied them to the Bible and the Church. We have found that the Bible, which contains the very soul of Christian faith, is more fundamental than the Church organization. But we have not yet found the ultimate source and guarantee of the future of Christianity. Let the Bible be preserved perpetually; let faith in it be strong; let the Church continue and increase: all this does not ensure a worthy future for the Christian religion. Only if God is real and God is with us may we look into the future with genuine confidence. If there is no God, man will still struggle to maintain his place against the encroachments of the blind mechanisms of the universe, but he will do so without any ground for confidence in the future, believing that human life is indeed a tale told by an idiot.

The future of Christianity and of civilization, then, depends ultimately on God; God is not dependent on our civilization or on Christianity. America might perish, the Church might perish; yet if God endured, there would be a secure future for humanity. God is the foundation of our hope. Hence the fundamental question about the future is the question about the future of God. That question naturally falls into two parts: first, the future of belief in God, and, secondly, the future existence and plans of God. The second part of this difficult problem cannot be treated

without a consideration of the basic reasons for believing in God. After treating these lofty themes we shall seek to draw some conclusions from them for our knowledge of the future of Christianity. The treatment of the future of belief in God will emphasize man's co-operation with God; that of the future of God will emphasize God's co-operation with man.

First, then, let us think about the future of belief in God. The basis for such thought must be found in our knowledge of the past. For many centuries belief in God was the common faith of the educated and the uneducated. Here and there a doubter or a skeptic arose, but he was so rare as to be conspicuous. It is true that faith had not merely the spiritual support of reason and religion, but also the support of governmental and ecclesiastical force in a most unspiritual way. Yet it would be quite unfair and unhistorical to interpret this blot on Christianity as being due to a deliberate and malicious attempt on the part of the ruling classes to keep the masses in subjection to their will. It would be difficult to explain the renewed allegiance of the most enlightened leaders of every generation to the Christian faith unless that allegiance were a sincere expression of confidence in its truth. The unity of medieval culture was a unity of conviction based on a wide and active intellectual life. Moderns make a great mistake in underestimating the scholarship and the objectivity of the thinkers whom we call the scholastics. Studies of DeWulf, Gilson, and others have reminded us of the intellectual greatness of those days. The philosophical and theological thought of the present time suffers by comparison not only with a Thomas Aquinas, who was a transcendent

genius, but also with many of the lesser scholastic lights. That the belief in God was almost unchallenged through centuries of intellectual activity of this sort is an evidence of its vitality. Even a materialist like Hobbes or a rationalist like Voltaire affirmed a belief in the Divine Being.

Not only was the belief in God practically unquestioned, but it was also held in substantially the same form by all thinkers—Christians, Jews, and Arabians. The philosopher Descartes, in defending his novel proof of God against objections raised by Mersenne, stated "that God is conceived in the same way by everyone, and that all theologians agree on the attributes which they ascribe to him." Elsewhere he describes those attributes. God, he says, is "an infinite, eternal, immutable, independent substance—omniscient, omnipotent, and by which I myself and all other things which are, . . . have been created and produced."

Such was the unity of theistic faith for many generations. But forces were at work which broke up this unity. The Renaissance came, and with it the birth of modern science. Protestantism arose, bringing the Protestant conscience, which exercised itself freely in all directions. Then came the conflict between the Calvinist view of God and the divine decrees of predestination on the one hand, and the Arminian view of human free choice and responsibility on the other. The Calvinist view survives to this day, but it is only one view among many. As science developed, probably the general acceptance of the theory of evolution had more to do with a modification of the idea of God than any other one influence. For Descartes in the seventeenth century, to take an example

we have already mentioned, the chief science was mathematics. One great characteristic of mathematics is its timelessness. The principles of mathematics are eternal truths, true at all times. Time does not change them. In a sense, the same thing is true of physics. A physical system is subject to mechanical laws; the passage of time neither adds to nor subtracts from the energy in the system. While time is a factor in physical changes, the time when an event occurs is of no essential importance to physics. There is no concept of development or of history for that science. But the science of biology, especially the study of evolution, is very different. Time is of supreme importance to evolution. The physical phenomena of half a million years before Christ were substantially the same as they are today, except for the manipulation of physical forces by man. But the biological phenomena of those times were radically different. Evolution is called creative or emergent. This means that new forms of life arise from time to time. The emergence of novelties and the struggle for survival among the different forms of life furnish the key to the evolutionary process. For evolution, then, time is ultimately real. If time is not real, evolution is not real. The same is true in an even more emphatic sense of history, which began to be studied scientifically in the nineteenth century. With this new emphasis on time, the divine attribute of eternity became more and more difficult to grasp, and the tendency was to think of God in more active terms as immanent in the very processes of evolution and history.

It is but natural that the enrichment of our

thought should lead to modifications of the idea of God. As the human mind has become more independent in modern times, it has found new methods of investigation, has amassed new collections of facts, and has developed theories from widely varying points of view. All this is a movement away from the unity of medieval culture toward specialization and hence toward the disintegration of the older unity. Philosophy has always sought to call the mind back to itself and to the central unity which is essential to coherent thought and life, but the development of science is today so magnificent and so self-assured that the influence of philosophy is for the time being slight. More typical is the utterance of a distinguished geologist who exclaimed: "The field of geology alone is so vast that no one man can possibly master more than a small part of it. How, then, could a philosopher hope to master the entire field of human knowledge?" If that is what a philosopher were trying to do, his task would indeed be impossible, but philosophy is not an encyclopedic summary of all of human knowedge. It is a search for principles of unity, and in this it resembles religion. Philosophy seeks to state these principles in intellectual form, and religion seeks to realize them in practical experience. When philosophy is dominant and unified as in the Middle Ages, religion is confident of its intellectual basis and develops practical fruits. But when philosophy is subordinate and disunified, as at the present time, religion is confused and disturbed. The historical situation makes it necessary that the present should be a time of change in thought about God and a time of intellectual experiment and groping. It

would be an amusing speculation to consider what Saint Thomas Aquinas would think if he were called on to attend a meeting of the contemporary philosophers of religion in America. The variety of opinion would astound and distress him without any doubt. He would find few, outside the Catholic faith, who would accept either his idea of God or his arguments for God. Almost the only point of contact that he would find with many of our contemporaries would be the belief to which Bishop F. J. McConnell has given expression, that God is Christlike. Amid all changes and varieties of doctrine among Christians, this is a constant. It is of the utmost importance, not merely as an act of faith, but because it calls attention to an actual fact in human history, the fact of Christ, his life, and his influence, which must be taken into account by any honest thinker who desires to penetrate into the secrets of reality.

The present state of belief in God, accordingly, may be described as active but confused. The movement of humanism, which was aggressive and rather promising a few years ago, is much less vigorous than it was, in the judgment of competent observers. Humanism was an attempt to develop what one scholar has called Christian atheism—that is, a loyalty to the moral and social ideals of Jesus without the faith of Jesus in a Heavenly Father. The obsolescence of humanism is far from solving the spiritual problem of the present; but the tendency away from humanism is significant as indicative of the feeling that the development of science does not render faith in God impossible. It is not necessary to enumerate the names of the distinguished scientists of the world who support this view.

Their names and their insights are familiar to every educated person.

It would not, however, be amiss to call attention to a recent little book by a learned philosopher and scientist who is especially famous for his frank rejection of any belief in God. I refer to Bertrand Russell's *Religion and Science.* Russell betrays no alteration of his own view in this book, but the book is nevertheless an interesting milestone in the history of religious belief; for Russell, after sketching the familiar facts of the conflict between theology and science, declares that the conflict has now reached a point of settlement. He finds no conclusive argument against religious faith in the results of science, although science precludes the truth of Biblical literalism. The importance of the book lies in the fact that Russell for the first time now clearly perceives that religion deals with values with which science is not concerned. His attack on religion is not based on the idea that science renders religion impossible. It is based, rather, on the assertion that we can have no knowledge about values. Yet, strangely enough, his development of the argument rests on the assumption that we do have knowledge about values. He attacks, for example, the belief in a cosmic purpose, chiefly on the ground that human personality is not a sufficiently worthy end for a cosmic purpose to be concerned with.

But Russell's whole argument has meaning only if he has some knowledge about what is worthy and what is unworthy—that is, knowledge about values. While he has caught himself here in a logical trap, he deserves credit for putting his finger on the essential problem, which is that of the value of human life.

If truth and goodness and beauty and worship are experiences that are really worth having, if brotherhood with man and fellowship with God are truly and permanently satisfying, then we are in possession of knowledge about values and that knowledge points to a divine source of values. Russell, of course, repudiates such inferences from his reasoning, but it is significant that they lie so near at hand. In another way, it may be added, he assumes that we have knowledge about values. His whole book is written largely as a plea for intellectual freedom. He shows that the danger to intellectual freedom in the past has come from the intolerance of theology, but he admits that this has practically come to an end, and that the real danger is now from political sources. He might well have added, economic. His remarks are sound; but they have little relevance unless he presupposes that he has knowledge about the value of intellectual freedom. Indeed, one might question whether any scientific knowledge would exist if scientists did not assume as a precondition of their investigation that the search for scientific truth is valuable. The net result of Russell's latest work, therefore, is to bring to the foreground the problem of value and to show that even one who denies that we have knowledge of value himself makes use of such knowledge. One who uses science to deny knowledge of the value of personality forgets that science is itself an achievement of free personality.

If the most brilliant and versatile foe of belief in God—I believe Russell merits this description—leaves so much of the evidence for God standing as this survey indicates, it would seem that there is little reason

to fear that belief in God will ever perish in the future. Little *reason!* It must, of course, be admitted that we human beings are not wholly rational and that our beliefs are not wholly guided by reason. The rise and fall of the curve of belief is partly determined by fashion, by cultural factors, by the intellectual climate, and by the simple direction of attention. The last named is more important than we sometimes realize, for it is a phenomenon necessarily attendant on an age of specialization. Everyone is to a greater or less extent a specialist today. A specialist concentrates his attention on his specialty. What lies outside of his specialty he does not so much refute or deny as ignore and forget. Thus religion may become a neglected area and God may be crowded out. But such episodes are no more than incidents in the long march of the spirit into the future. If an individual or a group, or even an entire nation, were to crowd God out of the field of attention, God would be able to draw the attention of others, and the advance of faith would be resumed. If our Occidental culture becomes more and more mechanized, more and more regimented, it may be that the Orient, with its sensitive spiritual nature, will become the center of the world's faith and take up the torch of the spiritual life. If the brilliant genius of the great German people should become so enslaved to nationalism that it would recognize only a "German" faith—a "healthy and natural religion which makes him brave, pious, and strong in the struggle for People and Fatherland," as Professor Ernst Bergmann puts it in "The Twenty-Five Theses of the German Religion"—then the cause of the universal and international God of all men might have to be

saved to the world again through the oft despised and exiled Jewish people. But in all this there is no historical reason to believe that faith in God will perish from the world.

There is reason to expect further changes in the nature of belief in God. Yet we must not confuse changes with surrenders, nor would it be reasonable to look on a period of ferment like the present as a sign of the permanent weakening of faith. On the contrary, the belief in God is such that it compels us to admit that any formulation we have yet achieved of the nature of God must fall short of that eternal reality which our thought is dimly striving to grasp. The only really unorthodox thinker is the one who thinks he knows all about God, or all that he needs to know. It is true that God's comfort and help are available to everyone, no matter how little he knows; but from this it does not follow that there is religious merit in a narrow and ignorant view of God. "God is greater than our heart," says the writer of the First Epistle of John; and we may add that the more we learn of God the more our hearts grow in understanding and breadth.

From the many-sidedness of God we may infer that the future will see other periods of change and ferment than the present—and that faith in God will survive them all. The nature of the reality revealed to us in experience may be described as being a tension of opposites. One does not need to become an Oriental dualist and to adopt the symbolism of Yang and Yin in order to recognize that there is a tension between flesh and spirit, between present and future, between the present and the absent, between myself

and others in every moment of experience. Experience being a field of tensions, it would seem that the God revealed in experience would also be a God for whom these tensions are real and in whom they are united. For instance, thought naturally affirms that God is one. But his unity is so exalted, so sublime, and so far from anything that we can experience, that religious thought has also affirmed that God is many. This is, of course, true of polytheism, but it is also true of the doctrine of the Trinity and, in a very different sense, of the thought of a modern half-believer who can see something divine here and there in nature and in human life, but cannot believe that these exalted moments come from one central will or power at the heart of the universe.

From this dual structure of unity and plurality it follows that sometimes the oneness of God is emphasized, sometimes the manifoldness of his self-expression. There are those mystics and pantheists who emphasize the unity so much that they regard the plurality of our experience as Maya and illusion, or to use an Occidental formula, error of mortal mind. Then there are the Trinitarians who are so concerned to maintain three persons in the Trinity that they really become tritheists, believers in three Gods; and there are the humanists, who cannot believe in any real God at all, yet who are devoted to the higher ideals and aspirations which reveal the divine in man. This tension between unity and plurality in the divine life will serve as an illustration of the principle. We find it also in the contrast between the thought of God as transcendent above the world and as immanent in the ongoing of natural processes. We find it

again in the contrast between God as a personal and loving Heavenly Father and God as universal and impersonal law.

The principle of tension and opposition in God serves to shed some light on the future of belief in God. One generation will emphasize unity, another plurality; one transcendence and another immanence; one personality and another impersonality. These shifts in emphasis as they occur may prove confusing to those who are living through them. It may seem as though the very idea of God is crumbling when a treasured aspect of his nature is less in the foreground than it was. But it is more reasonable to take the long perspective and to see that the human mind is too small to take in the whole of God at once. What seem like confused and conflicting views of God may prove to be only the discovery of other aspects of his being. As we peer into the future, we may therefore expect to find many new insights, many new explorations of the inexhaustible depths of God. Some of them will seem, when they arise, to be denials of God; some will indeed be said by their advocates to be disproofs of God. Yet it is reasonable to believe that the denials will be only denials of a partial truth in the interests of a larger truth that will dawn later, and that the disproofs will be only disproofs of the finality of a one-sided view.

The very process which I am predicting for the future is going on in Russia. The Communists are denying God verbally and in some of their practice; yet what they are really denying is not the cosmic power that makes for human justice and brotherhood. That they believe in. What they are denying is that the

Being revealed by the antisocial behavior of the Russian Church is a Being in whom they can believe. Their reaction against the Church has led the Russians to lose for the present much that is valuable and true about God; but also they are discovering much about the social purposes of God that we cannot afford to ignore. Little knowledge of God is contributed by the ardent friends of Deity who denounce communistic atheism in the interest, not of a deeper and more spiritual religion, but of the defense and increase of their own stake in private property, without regard to the love of God.

What has been said thus far has borne directly only on the failure of belief in God, yet it has tacitly assumed the reality of God. We must now bring the fundamental question into the open and turn from asking about the future of belief in God to asking about the actual future of the real God. Let us put the question at first in a deliberately paradoxical form: Has God a future?

The question in this form is almost ridiculous, and still it may serve the purpose of bringing before us with sharper outlines the relation between two questions into which this one breaks up: first, Is there a God? and, secondly, What is our ground for hope for a better future? The answer to the two questions consists in pointing to the same evidence and in reasoning on the same principles about the evidence. Anything which makes us believe in God also makes us believe in an unfailing future for what is good and beautiful. Anything which makes us believe in a better future, also leads us on to believe in God. The question, Has God a future? therefore naturally leads at once to

answers in the if-then form. *If* there is a God, *then* the future is his. And we may also say: *If* there is a future for value, *then* there is evidence for God.

There are some fundamental truths that we overlook too easily. One such truth is that the validity of our scientific knowledge, as well as of our religious faith, depends on the trustworthiness of the universe. The trustworthiness of the universe is fully guaranteed only if there is a moral power at the heart of the universe—a God. The great philosopher Descartes has often been criticized for teaching that our certainty that there is an external world at all, and that we are not living in a maze of dreamy self-deception, is based entirely on the veracity of God. If God—or the nature of the universe—is a deceiver, Descartes held, then none of our experiences can be trusted to give us correct information about the real world, present, past, or future. Descartes was aware of the difficulty in his view, because he knew that objectors would urge that if God is not a deceiver, then we ought never to be deceived; yet we certainly are deceived, as is shown by our daily errors of judgment. Descartes answers this difficulty by saying that God never intends to deceive us and that our errors are owing to the fact that the human will makes wrong interpretations of the material God gives us. Whether Descartes's view is wholly correct or not, it cannot be wholly wrong. The supposition that experiences in the consciousness of us insignificant human beings today can give us sound knowledge about what has been in the remote past or what is or will be in distant spaces of the universe is one to which we are so accustomed that we overlook its implications. The trustworthi-

ness of our knowledge presupposes the trustworthiness of reality. The trustworthiness of reality points to God.

We may go further. It is an undeniable fact that there is implanted in every human soul desire for life and aspiration for better life. When this desire and this aspiration are thought out to the end, they are seen to be a longing for God. Usually philosophers regard desire with the utmost suspicion. Thinking which is guided by desire is often misguided. How easy it is to think of reasons for what we want to do or believe! How hard it is to face harsh and unpleasant truths, which thwart our desires! Psychologists call the process of finding reasons for what we desire by the name of rationalization, as distinguished from sound reasoning, which considers only logic and facts. We are naturally rationalizers rather than reasoners. Hence it is quite right for philosophers to warn us against believing in God merely because we desire to do so. Furthermore, it is no service to the cause of God to teach that we should believe and do whatever our desires dictate. If there is anything against which religion ought to direct its energy, it is the rule of life by desire. Our desires are in conflict with each other, some dragging us below the level of the animal, and some beckoning us upward toward God. Desire alone is no guide to life. Yet in thus criticizing desire philosophers should not forget that desires are real facts in human life, calling for explanation. How does it come that life is such a chaos of desire? The chaos itself gives no answer to this question. But if we find grounds for belief in God when we confront the facts of experience with a rational mind, then we

may turn back to the chaos of desire and reinterpret it. It then becomes reasonable to view our highest desires as the voice of God in the human soul and to find the task of life in the control of our lower, destructive, conflicting desires by our higher, creative, unifying desires. Then we can trust our higher desires, as we can trust scientific knowledge, because of the trustworthiness of God.

Our hope for the future, our confidence that our noblest aspirations will find fulfillment, rests on God. This does not mean that life is worthless and ideals are meaningless if we deny God. On the contrary, many noble unbelievers in God and Christianity show that there is an ineradicable basis in our experience for the moral life and for ideal values, whether we believe in God or not. Furthermore, we should not suppose that the actual future hangs on our view of God. God is what he is whether we believe or disbelieve. Nevertheless it remains true that our human hope for the future of Christianity and of civilization is indissolubly connected with our faith in God; and it is tragically unreasonable for us to adopt, without cogent and compelling grounds, a view of God that causes us to regard the future as imperiled. When we neglect our thought about God, we may slide casually into a habit of doubt without seeing that we are destroying the basis of our hope for future security. Our doubts will enfeeble our action.

What, then, is the evidence for God? When this question is raised, one involuntarily thinks of the man who heard a sermon on the arguments for God, and went away saying, "I believe nevertheless." But, after all, the poor man should either have furnished the

preacher with the reasons which led him to so firm a belief, or else he should have confessed that he believed for no reason at all. A belief which cannot survive the examination of its own grounds, or which repudiates all argument and reason, does not seem to be rooted in the soil of reality. It is a delicate plant that perishes when the storms of thought burst over it. In these days such delicate belief is of less value than ever before in human history. Now, if ever, we need rugged realism.

Some seven years ago in a little book called *The Problem of God* I wrote a chapter called "The Evidence for God," in which I brought together the main facts which seemed to point toward the truth of belief in God. As I reread those arguments today, I find that this or that detail might be stated differently, but on the whole it appears that the experience and thought of the intervening years has strengthened my conviction of the essential correctness of the presentation. For our present purposes I shall draw freely on that discussion, modifying its wording and thought to conform to my present purpose and present convictions. Let no one suppose that these arguments are intended to demonstrate God with absolute mathematical certainty. If such a proof were available, then no rational mind in the whole world could possibly doubt God, and we know that some rational minds do actually doubt and even deny his existence. The purpose of these considerations is, rather, to show that faith is not a sheer will to believe or a mere yielding to desire, but is based on facts and sound reasons. Faith in God is proposed not as the only possible conclusion of a syllogism, but as a rational working hypothesis.

God can never be fully understood; but faith in him is a well-grounded guide for the experiment of living.

There are six items which impress me as pointing to belief in God. They are (1) the fact of reason, (2) the necessity of eternal being, (3) the fact of conscious personality, (4) the emergence of novelties, (5) the existence of values and evils, and (6) religious experience. These are none too clear as they stand, and each will be explained briefly.

The first foundation of belief in God is, I think, the fact of reason. As we experience it, reason is the power of the human mind to perceive the relations of its ideas, to see that some are inconsistent with each other, that some are consistent, and that some are so closely related that they follow necessarily from others. If there were no reason, then experience would be a chaos without meaning or connection. The most fundamental act of the human mind is its will to be reasonable. Without reason there would be no God. There would be no trustworthy basis even for any belief in a world, present, past, or future. If there were a supreme being under such circumstances, he would not be reasonable, and hence would not be worthy of reverence or worship. The cause of God and the cause of reason stand or fall together. It is a fatal error for a religious believer to attack reason, for in so doing he attacks the grounds for belief in God and the character of God. The fact of reason does not, it is true, suffice to prove that there is a God, but it is a necessary part of the evidence for God, since reason is not merely a psychological process in human minds, but it points to a world beyond our minds which has a rational structure. Belief in the

rationality of the universe is a postulate presupposed by all of the sciences and by all thought. A universe in which reason prevails is a universe that points toward its God.

Secondly, from the fact of reason there follows the necessity of eternal being. John Locke pointed out that "there must be something eternal," since otherwise we should have to imagine that "pure nothing, the perfect negation and absence of all beings," could produce real existence. It may seem that the mere abstract necessity that there must be something real from all eternity does not carry us very far toward God. True, it is only one step in the evidence. But it is not unimportant that the sublime thought of the Eternal, with its elevating religious and mystical value, is as necessary for reason as it is for worship and for our thought of God.

Thirdly, the fact of conscious personality is, as was said, further evidence for belief in God. Our personal consciousness, with all the varied experiences which it contains, is the only part of the whole universe to which we have immediate first-hand access. Everything which lies beyond our consciousness is known to us only through its effects therein. This fact, which philosophers have long been familiar with, has for various reasons been more or less discounted of late. But no argument can alter the truth that all the facts I have to deal with are facts of my personal experience. If we wish to think fundamentally, we must see that for every person all that he ever says, does, thinks, or believes about the world or God, other persons or the future, is based on the evidence presented in his own personal experience. Reason, our

starting point, is in our own consciousness. Our belief in a world and in an Eternal Being is an inference from our consciousness.

When personal consciousness is mentioned to some thinkers today, their first comment will be to say, "But consciousness depends on brain." This remark is only an incomplete truth. Consciousness does not depend on brain alone; it depends on all the rest of the universe; and if the rest of the universe contains God, then brain may be the instrument of God. But the incompleteness of the remark follows from its uncritical nature. It is uncritical because it overlooks the fact that our knowledge that there is a brain and a physical world is derived from our consciousness. The hypothesis that there is a brain is one that is necessary in order to explain the processes of consciousness. Yet the brain derives its logical right to be believed in from the fact of personality, and, as a stream cannot rise higher than its source, so our statements about the brain and the physical world cannot discredit personality. Moreover, all our statements about the whole of physical nature are an incomplete explanation of the actual range of our personal experience. While they do account for the coming and going of our sense perceptions, they do not account for our sense of obligation, our ideals, or our experience of self-identity and unity. If we trust our sense experiences as a source of knowledge about things, why do we not see that our whole personality, with its ideal values and its unity, points to a source that includes more than the physical? If our minds were but mirrors of external physical changes, as some think, there would still be the question how physical changes

could produce a mirroring mind, which is itself not matter or motion but consciousness. However, our minds are so much more than a mirror of matter that we are forced to believe that the source of our minds must be more than matter. It must include a power sufficient to explain all the motions of matter and also all the ideals of man. Such a power—energy and ideals together—is what we mean by God. Conscious personality contains the facts which are signs to us of what is real. If we read all the signs, we see that they mean God.

Fourthly, what is called the emergence of novelties points to God. By the emergence of novelties is meant the fact that new properties arise in the course of evolution, different from what has gone before and not capable of being explained as a mere recombination of previous material. If once everything in nature was inorganic matter, then at some time life emerged —a new property. If once life was there, blind and unthinking, then at some time mind and consciousness emerged—another new property. Now, this fact, which is very widely acknowledged, means two things: it means, first, that the Cosmic Power is creative, and, secondly, that the Cosmic Power must be viewed, not in the light of the elementary beginnings of the evolutionary process, but in the light of the whole process and its highest forms. Hence the Cosmic Power must at least be such as to contain within itself a full explanation of the highest and best in human personality, which is the supreme instance of emergence. Hence the Cosmic Power is reasonably to be thought of as a God who is a creative Person, yet with powers far beyond those of any created person.

Fifthly, we are confronted by the existence of values and evils. In touching on personality we have alluded to ideals and so have anticipated this in part. But it is not only true that there is an aspiration for ideal values in man; it is also true that there are experiences which hinder the achievement of values or goods. These we call evils. Life is a conflict of goods and evils. Many of the evils are due to human wrongdoing and cannot be ascribed to any power beyond us. Many other evils have a disciplinary value; they strengthen the will, develop courage and character, and warn us against dangers we may avoid. Yet after all these evils are considered, there still remain other evils which, so far as we can see, are not man's fault, and are not well calculated to produce character in man. Such evils are the chief objection to belief in God, and they cannot be ignored. Neither can the goods of life be ignored. No amount of evil can wipe out the good that humanity has experienced.

The goods are evidence for God which the evils do not cancel. The unexplained evil may be thought of in one of two ways by those who believe in God and find no satisfaction in the appeal to a Satan. The usual method is to say that these unexplained evils are necessary to the attainment of some good ends which God is seeking and of which we know nothing at all. This explanation has the merit of humility about what we do not know, and of the very obviously logical inference that God must be seeking many ends which we do not understand, but it has the defect of assuming that we know values to be values, while not knowing evils to be evils. If we know so little about evils, perhaps we know equally little about values. It does

not seem reasonable to be agnostic about evil and gnostic about values. Hence the second way of dealing with these unexplained evils seems more reasonable to me, namely, the view which holds that there is not only a human, but also a cosmic struggle between good and evil. Reason, good, beauty, truth are the controlling powers, the powers that give meaning to existence. But the God whose will is unfailingly directed toward these ideals finds within his eternal experience, according to this view, something that he has to control, endure, and wrestle with. Experience shows that the control of order and law over disorder in the universe has never failed, and faith may infer that it never will fail. A faith that admits the presence of something given within God which he did not create but which he can endure and control seems to be more in harmony with the evidence than a faith which declares that all apparent evil is real good.

Whichever of the two views of evil be taken, the effect on our religious philosophy of the future is substantially the same. Whether our God is an omnipotent one whose ways we cannot understand, or whether his power is limited—in either case we have ground to trust his ultimate control of the future and at the same time to expect that the future will continue to contain much that we do not understand. The existence of values and of evils leads to belief in a God who is good and whose power is sufficient to control evil.

Sixthly, there are the facts of religious experience. No one who has made the experiment of religious living, of faith and trust and prayer and communion with God, can deny that religious experience is a

reality. Like all experience, it is open to more than one interpretation, but no interpretation can destroy the witness of the spirit through centuries of believers. Taken by itself, religious experience may be convincing only to the believer. Taken in connection with the other evidence, as reason requires that it should be, it is an experimental support of the belief in God. Religious experience is evidence that the Cosmic Power that works in and on us all, responds to the attitude of co-operation and faith. Here too is a sign of God.

The evidence that there is a God is, therefore, sufficient to ground a rational faith and trust in God for the future, although it is not an absolute demonstration. He who demands absolute demonstration before he believes or acts will not only have to do without a God; he will have to do without a world, without a past, and without a future. All living and all science rest on faith; all knowledge is a venture, an experiment. But the venture that there is a God whom we can trust has a remarkably solid foundation. There is no science and no aspect of experience that is irreconcilable with faith in God. Some aspects of experience—our sense perceptions—are almost equally compatible with naturalism and with theism. Yet the higher experiences of consciousness, the creation of novelties, the struggle between good and evil, and the facts of religious experience are more harmonious with faith in God than with faith in unconscious nature as the source of all these facts. To adopt naturalism is to accept these higher facts as growing in some unintelligible and miraculous way out of what has in itself no consciousness or value,

whereas to adopt theism is to accept a view that explains and unifies both the facts of physical nature and the facts of our higher experience. With this faith, grounded in experience and reason, and combining the realistic and the idealistic facts, we may resume our inquiry about the future of God.

God is. What is his future? We have found reason to identify him with the eternal, and with reason. He is the unbegun and the unending. He is always there. It is as absurd to think of God as coming to an end as it is to think of his beginning. It is utterly irrational to think of a time when there was nothing, followed by the beginning of God. It violates all our thought about cause. But it is equally irrational to think of a time when God would vanish. If he ceased to be, there would be nothing left. The whole universe, which depends on him, would become less than nothing, for it would not leave even a memory. This supposition is a form of irrationality correlative with the supposal that God began out of nothing. If he began, he was an effect without a cause; if he comes to an end, he will be a cause without an effect. For reason each is impossible. Faith in God is faith in One who is everlasting.

At times like this in the history of the world, when human behavior is more incalculable than ever before, when crisis follows crisis with alarming rapidity and unexpectedness, when the elements seem to conspire to cause torrid drought in summer and raging floods in winter and spring, a strong and calm faith is a source of power. With confidence in the eternal God, one may face the changes of time and circumstance inwardly fortified by the confidence that in the long

run reason and the eternal values will make their control of chaos evident.

Since the Old Testament and Plato, religion has had as one of its most profound and moving factors this faith in the eternal. This is expressed by the writer of Deuteronomy (33.27): "The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms." The Second Isaiah (57.15) calls God "the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity." Plato, in more philosophical terms, says: "If so be that this Cosmos is beautiful and its Constructor good, it is plain that he fixed his gaze on the eternal" (*Timaeus,* 29A).

In the most practical and active moments of life we easily forget the eternal. We may rail at it because it does not repair our cars, or pay our bills, or prevent losses, or heal the sick, or raise the dead. But man is more than action and there are limits to what any possible action can accomplish. When we face present perplexities and future uncertainties with the profounder aspect of our being, then, indeed, deep calleth unto deep, and we experience the truth of the words of the Preacher, "He hath set eternity in their heart." Faith in God is faith in an endless, unfailing future.

Just as faith in divine eternity is faith in an endless future, so faith in the divine goodness as an eternal attribute of the divine reason is faith in human immortality. There is only one ground for belief in immortality, but that is a sufficient ground: it is the goodness of God. A good God may, as I believe, have to suffer. He may have an eternal cross to bear as a symbol of the tragic seriousness of all existence; but a God can never be conquered in all eternity. The

supreme test of his conquest, as far as we know the universe, is what becomes of man. If man were utterly to perish, to die like the beasts, then God would have brought into being a multitude of souls to whom he gave hope and the promise of high values, but with whom he kept faith for only a few years—and then broke faith. Such a supposition is impossible. For God to bring a personality into existence and then to destroy it utterly if there was any slightest hope of its achieving value at any time in its future career, would be for God to cease to be God because he had changed his eternal nature from good to evil. He who ceases to believe in immortality has either ceased to believe in God at all, or, if he does believe in him, has denied that God is good in the sense of respecting the value of personality. The Christian religion will have a dismal future if faith in immortality wanes and dies, for confidence in God's goodness will have been undermined. Strong, vigorous, rational faith affirms the eternal God, eternal goodness, and eternal life.

Yet in all frankness it must be admitted that Christianity means far more than a contemplation of the eternal. During the World War a German soldier who was a student of philosophy wrote home to one of his teachers in despair. He said that the war seemed to be destroying every value he held dear. Nevertheless, he was able to conquer his despair when he stopped to think that the worst bombs and artillery barrages could never affect Kant's transcendental unity of apperception. The student, of course, had in mind the insight that eternal truths cannot be harmed by anything that happens in time. Christian faith, as we have seen, is grounded likewise in similar con-

fidence in the eternal. Yet Christianity is not merely a doctrine of contemplation; it is a doctrine of salvation. The German student's faith was a faith in God, but despair of the world. The world, he feared, had no future. It was utterly lost. Only eternal truth would abide, but man and civilization were done for.

It is true that many Christians have regarded contemplation of eternal truth as the chief aim and highest good of human life, whether in this world or in the world to come. Hear the philosopher Descartes expound this view in his Third Meditation:

> For just as faith teaches us that the supreme felicity of the other life consists only in this contemplation of the Divine Majesty, so we continue to learn by experience that a similar meditation, though incomparably less perfect, causes us to enjoy the greatest satisfaction of which we are capable in this life.

But if this is truly the sole aim of life, then it makes no difference what happens in the world. Man's whole concern about the future of this world is beside the point, if only God is eternal and man can enjoy him forever.

After all, is Christianity concerned only with the eternal? Is it more abstract than Plato himself? Plato, it will be remembered, was a friend of the eternal Ideas; but Plato longed to remake human life in accordance with the eternal model to which God himself eternally conforms. Hence he wrote the *Republic* as his ideal of the best state; and, realizing from his experiences in Sicily and his good judgment that this ideal could not be realized, he wrote the *Laws* as a second best, hoping that it might be a guide to practice. Does Christianity care less for everyday life

than did Plato? If we turn to Jesus, the answer is plain. He was deeply and constantly concerned about the life of man here and now. The Synoptic Gospels represent him as chiefly teaching about conduct that expresses love. John, it is true, ascribes to him a view of love and of mysticism which is much closer to pure contemplation; but it is John in which the famous pragmatists' text appears, "If any man willeth to do his will, he shall know of the doctrine." Where Christianity, in its purest form, teaches contemplation, it is usually for the sake of better action. The Christian religion, then, is not simply an adoration of the eternal; it is a religion of action within the field of human history. "Go ye into all the world." It is true Jesus taught that his followers should pray to their Father who is in secret. But what should they pray? First for contemplation: "Hallowed be thy name"; after that, all is action—give, forgive, lead, deliver—"on earth as it is in heaven." Christianity is a religion of the eternal come to dwell in time—of the incarnate Son of God. It is a religion of history and calls its adherents to mold history and to look to the future, confident that God will always be present in the historical process. A Christian will seek the strength that comes from mystical communion with the eternal, but he will use that strength in a program of action.

The future of God, therefore, from the Christian point of view concerns not merely his eternally unchanging character and ideals, but it also concerns him as Lord of history. The Christian God is revealed not merely by abstract ideas or ontological arguments, but by his mighty acts in history. He has

purposes in time which he reveals and achieves gradually. His Lordship of history does not mean that he predestines or determines every moment of the historical process. Far from it. History is no clear record of the will of God. But silently, patiently, unfailingly, a divine purpose is at work in history, contending not only against the selfishness and ignorance of human wills, but also, as I believe, against the obstacles and sufferings of existence which God did not create but bears as his burden. Whatever the obstacles he perseveres, and his power never finds an obstacle which halts his onward march.

The Christian faith in an eternal God who is also Lord of history and consequently Lord of the future is one that, because it points beyond any time that we can ever experience in this life, can never be verified in the sense in which a scientific hypothesis can be verified. Its verification consists in its power to interpret what we do know. In this respect every theory about the future is on the same footing. Every statement about the future, even the simple statement that there will be one, is a speculation, a venture of faith, which can never be completely verified, because the future always eludes us, no matter how long we live. It is always the yet-to-come. But no human being can live or make sense out of his present experience unless he has some sort of faith in the unverified future. Faith in the future is a precondition of reason.

One way to test the truth of faith in the future as God's future is to compare views of the future which leave God out with those that find God in all history. For our purpose, we may examine briefly the conclusions of Nietzsche, Spengler, and Pareto.

Friedrich Nietzsche, the German philosopher of the Superman, is regarded by many, along with Hegel, Marx, and Darwin, as one of the four most influential thinkers of the nineteenth century. He is also one of the most misunderstood. He is pictured by some as an instigator of war and perhaps as the spiritual cause of the World War. His views were indeed radical, revolutionary, and in many respects false; but he was no militarist. The wars which he advocated were wars of the spirit. He rejected God and Christianity, which he took to be a religion for slaves and weaklings; and he substituted for God the ideal of a superman, a new being who would arise on this earth with courage, beauty, and power so far transcending man that man will be to him "as the ape is to man—either a joke or a sore shame." His whole philosophy was therefore a philosophy of the future. He was confident that the future would bring unlimited development to man. He denied God because he felt that belief in God stood in the way of the glorious future of man. "What would there be to create," he asked, "if there were Gods?" He was not satisfied to be a fellow creator with the supreme creator; he yearned to be the highest creator himself. "If there were Gods, how could I endure it not to be a God?"

In Nietzsche's yearnings we are easily led to see no more than a blasphemous megalomania. Yet such an interpretation would be unfair to his real insight. With all his exaggerations and errors, Nietzsche contributed at least three great ideas. One was his emphasis on the absolute value of personality and the creative will. Another was his unshaken confidence in the future. Superman would come. Our love and

our effort should go out to that future that is to be. Hence Nietzsche did not like the word neighbor (nighboor), the near one. His motto was not love of the near one, but love of the furthest, the most remote. A third was his faith in eternity. This is expressed in what he calls Zarathustra's roundelay:

O man! Take heed!
What saith deep midnight's voice indeed?
"I slept my sleep—,
"From dream I wake and plead:—
"The world is deep,
"And deeper than the day could read.
"Deep is its woe—,
"Joy—deeper still than grief can be:
"Woe saith: Hence! Go!
"But joys all want eternity—,
"—Want deep, profound eternity!"

Here is an extraordinary spiritual phenomenon—a man flying away from Christianity, denying God with the most extreme negations, and yet in his own deepest convictions making assertions that point plainly to God. For, if personality really is an absolute value, and if the future has possibilities far surpassing the highest that man has yet known, and if the yearning of joy for eternity is the very voice of truth, then the essential evidence for God is acknowledged by Nietzsche, and God is seen to be both the Lord of history and the Eternal One. What Nietzsche was really rebelling against was not God, not the divine promise of the future, not eternal personality; what he was really rebelling against was the inadequacy and pettiness of the lives of those who take the name of God upon their lips.

In turning to the second of these rejectors of God, Oswald Spengler, we have a very different person and point of view before us. Nietzsche was first and foremost an individualist, interested in the great personality. Spengler cared but little for individuals; his interest was in the birth, growth, development, and death of types of culture. Nietzsche looked ahead with hope and faith to the future development of Superman; Spengler believed that our civilization was in a period of decline and doomed to death. They were agreed in being interested in the future and in facing that future without God.

Now, it seems all but impossible to find any testimony to faith in God and a divine future in Spengler, and it must be conceded that there is very little—all the less when we consider the influence of National Socialism upon him. In 1931, in *Man and Technics,* he was still saying, "Optimism is cowardice. . . . Our duty is to hold on to the lost position without hope, without rescue." In 1934, in *The Hour of Decision,* he had reached the point of saying, "He whose sword compels victory here will be Lord of the world." The change from grim pessimism, ennobled by a sense of duty, to an ideal of military conquest, can hardly be called a step nearer to God. But if one surveys Spengler's thought as a whole, one sees some light. It is true that for him we are in a dying phase of civilization. Yet this is not the whole story; the death of our civilization does not end the human race. In the past, when one civilization has lived through its life cycle and perished, another civilization has been born. If Spengler's philosophy is a philosophy of death, it is also a philosophy of birth. The universe is such as

to produce new values when old ones vanish. This insight of Spengler's is very far from being a complete basis for theistic faith; and it has not a sufficiently broad insight into divine purpose. Nevertheless, it is instructive that a man, whose philosophy of the downfall of Occidental civilization was originated before the World War and was to no small degree verified by it, a man who therefore was a pessimist confirmed by experience—that such a man should frame a philosophy that looked beyond the present collapse to a new life. His thought is at least a partial confirmation of faith in God, and contains a truth which is essential to all such faith, namely, that the future of God is not dependent on the future of the particular civilization in which we live.

Animated by the desperate urge of mingled experimental zeal and despair, certain thinkers are seeking more and more thoroughly to face life without any trace of belief in God. Nietzsche and Spengler tried, but in vain. The evidence for God remained with them, even when they denied his existence. Now we have the work of another thinker, Vilfredo Pareto. He was an Italian engineer who became a sociologist, and whose chief work has been translated since his death as *Man and Society*. Unlike Nietzsche, he finds no great value in human personality. Unlike Spengler, he sees no thread of meaning or of destiny running through the history of civilization. This is no place to enter into a discussion of the highly technical terminology of Pareto. In a few simple words, his theory is that human behavior is ultimately determined by human sentiments, and that rationality and idealism are of very little social importance. At any

rate, they are not determinants of social action. The aim of science is to state the facts, free from any idealizations or interpretation. In Pareto we have a new Machiavelli—a thoroughgoing social realist. And if he is right, if reason and value are as secondary and trivial as he teaches, there is not much left to human life except cynical skepticism. By building a theory that finds no place for the value of God in human society, he has left very little place for the value of man. A future without God would be, on Pareto's principles, a future not worth having, for it would be a future in a society where rational values do not count.

A follower of Pareto, like Mr. Bernard de Voto, editor of *The Saturday Review of Literature,* draws logical consequences from this theory. When asked by Mr. Edmund Wilson on what principles he was editing the *Review,* he answered, in effect, "None."[1] He declared that he was an exponent of no gospel, that he had no theory, but that he was a lover of facts and one who desired to make them known. Another avowed follower of Pareto is Mussolini, whether he has fully mastered Pareto's theory or not. At any rate, Mussolini may be said to have acted in accordance with the evaluation of reason and sentiment which is Pareto's basis. By appealing to sentiments and by using reason only to support that appeal and make it effective, Mussolini has built up an extensive new empire.

Is there in this view of Pareto's anything that can possibly be regarded as evidence for God? Has the

[1] See *The Saturday Review of Literature,* February 13, 1937, p. 8.

school of Pareto succeeded in ridding itself of all traces of God? Let us mention some of the chief traits of Pareto. A love of fact, a belief that it is worth while to disseminate facts, a hatred of humbug—these are the outstanding characteristics of Pareto's work. As long as these traits survive in the human mind, so long will there be some evidence for God; for the love of fact and the hatred of humbug as the guiding purpose of a human life raise at once the question: What is the source of this restless love of truth, this willingness to renounce what has once been believed, this urge to spread truth and denounce error? If there is anything sound and right in all this, is it not a sign of the presence in the universe of a power beyond man that is leading him on to something better? Does not even Pareto bear grudging testimony to the purpose of God for the future?

All of these men who try to face the future without God show, in one way or another, their confidence that it is good to know the facts and that we can meet them. Whatever their theories, these men show by the greatness of their minds and the power of their imaginations something of the possibilities and resources of human personality.

When one surveys the struggles of men to escape from God and to face the future without him, and sees that all of these struggles themselves bear witness to evidence for the reality of God, is it possible to escape the conviction that the time will come when men will see the impossibility of a complete escape from God, and will admit the force of the evidence that they are forced to admit? The humanism of our time is a striking example of a willingness to grant all of the

evidence which points toward God, yet accompanied by an unwillingness to draw the inference which gives reality and substance to the admitted facts of human value. If we deny God, we may still live in a world of beauty, goodness, and holiness; yet that world is as it were a dream world. It is man's experience, man's feeling and aspiration and that only. If we affirm God, then we can see that our values are rooted in reality and we can see, above all, that our God is not only a guarantor of the future, but also a creator of new values which we cannot yet imagine.

There is perhaps no more fitting expression of faith in the future of God than that of Saint Paul in Romans 8. 18: "For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed to us-ward." One who can face the future with this faith will not be overwhelmed by fears about the future of Christianity.

CHAPTER IV

THE FUTURE OF MAN

As we begin the last chapter of this forward look, it may be profitable to look back for a moment and see just where we stand. In the first chapter we tried to explore the nature of our knowledge of the future. It turned out that all scientific knowledge is conditional, of what we called the if-then type; whereas faith is categorical and asserts, It shall be. But, we may add, scientific knowledge is precise and detailed; it gives the day and the hour of an eclipse, even though it does not guarantee that the sun and the moon and the earth will continue to be. On the other hand, religious faith is not at all precise and detailed. It is certain that God's control will never fail and that this will forever be God's universe, but it does not pretend to give us a detailed map of the future. When we hear an assertion like "Millions now living will never die," we suspect it as bad science and bad religion. The desire for a definite diagram of the future, a horoscope of coming events, is not a religious desire. Then in the second chapter we noted that religious faith in the future of Christianity was based on acknowledgment of the Bible as its soul and of a Church as its institutional body. We also noted changes that would have to take place in the attitude adopted toward the Bible and the Church if the affirmation of faith about the future of Christianity was to be realized. In the third chapter we found that all faith in a good future rests on the will of God as its ultimate support. We

therefore considered the future of belief in God, and the future of God himself. This led us to examine the grounds for belief in God. We concluded that belief in God will never die out and that the future is under the control of his eternal nature as expressed by his acts in history.

All of our thought about the future, however we approach it, whether with skepticism or with faith, is necessarily centered in man. God is the foundation of our hope for man. If there is no hope for man in God, then God is not really God—he is not worthy of man's respect. If he has promised so much to man, has raised such lofty expectations, has implanted in him yearnings so noble and sublime, then he is a deceiver and hence a devil rather than a God. Every reason for faith in God is also a reason for faith in man; and every reason for faith in man is a reason for faith in God. The problem of this last chapter, accordingly, is the future of man.

In the light of the previous chapters, we may lay at the foundation of our thought the conviction that whatever man does, God will be with him and Christianity will survive. The future—in the long run—will be good. This does not mean that it will be wholly good, any more than past or present is wholly good; nor does it mean that the immediate future will necessarily be an improvement over the present or that the progress of good will be a steady advance. It means only that in the long run good will not fail. The view which we take of man must always be a view in perspective.

To say that Christianity will always be means that there will always be a divine ideal which commands

the transformation of the present in the light of the eternal and a faith which sees the eternal God at work in human history. This faith points to the future and proclaims that the end of the world is the triumph of God. Whatever man does, God will find a way to win him back to himself; and whatever happens in the realm of physical nature, God will find a home and an instrument for the spiritual life of man after the earth has ceased to be habitable. But, as we remarked, Christianity has no detailed information to impart about the time between the present and the time when biological life will cease on this earth, except the name "Immanuel"—God is with us. God is like the chess-player, to whom William James compared him. God is playing the great game with humanity; man may make the strangest and wildest moves one may imagine; some moves may be strokes of rebellious genius against God; but God can always make the winning move. The game never escapes from the control of the Cosmic Player.

Man is a free being. Within limits set by the laws of nature and the range of the individual's own experience man can choose this or that. He has the power to say "Yes" or "No." Hans Driesch well defines freedom as consisting of this power. Much of man's life is determined by the past. Everything, in fact, is determined except what he will do with his experience. As Borden P. Bowne long ago demonstrated, and as E. G. Spaulding has shown again in his essay, "The Walls of the Past," science itself could not be built up unless man were free to think and to judge his thoughts by free appeal to the ideal of reason. Every scientific experiment is a free act. The very

theory of determinism which denies freedom is itself an achievement of free thought, although an inconsistent one, because it denies its own foundation. In so far as man is free, it is not yet determined which one of his possible futures he will choose to realize. To a large extent, then, the future of man is indeterminate, not merely in the sense that we are ignorant of what it will be, but also in the sense that "the shape of things to come" depends partly on how our will chooses to shape them.

The world today is full of plans for the remaking of the human future. Statesmen seem to be followers of Omar Khayyam:

> Ah Love! could you and I with Him conspire
> To grasp this sorry Scheme of Things entire,
> Would not we shatter it to bits and then
> Re-mould it nearer to the Heart's Desire!

It is not a patchwork reform that men are seeking now, but a change of the scheme of things entire. They have succeeded in shattering the old Russia, the old China, the old Italy, and Germany, and Spain. They have undertaken vast schemes of remolding near to the heart's desire. But hearts are not yet satisfied, purges are in progress, the headman's ax is falling.

One of the most remarkable features of the ideas which are now gripping and almost throttling the modern world is their novelty. Socialism and Communism, it is true, are ancient dreams of humanity ever since Plato's *Republic* and the book of Acts. But the fundamentals of what we know today as Communism do not antedate 1848, when the *Manifesto of the Communist Party* was published by Marx and Engels.

Fascism is related to older ideas too, and some of its principles are to be found in Machiavelli, but Mussolini not so many years ago was a Socialist by conviction, and was expelled from the Italian Communist Party in 1914; the system of Fascism was then utterly nonexistent. Fascism was a product of his war experiences, and he founded the Fascist movement in 1919. The famous march on Rome occurred in 1922. So recent is Fascism, which now threatens all but to engulf parliamentary democracy all over the world. The National Socialism of Germany is much more recent. It is true that, like Fascism, it has some roots in the past, and is to be linked loosely with Hegel, more closely with Fichte's *Closed Commercial State.* Nevertheless, in its present form it is a new political, social, and economic conception in Germany. Its official program, which has remained unchanged, was formulated in München, February 24, 1920. It had its John the Baptist in 1923, when Moeller van den Bruch wrote *The Third Reich.* But the Messianic utterances of the new scheme of things are first to be found in Hitler's *Mein Kampf,* Vol. I of which appeared in 1925 and Vol. II in 1927. In 1924 the first Nazis were elected to the Reichstag, fourteen of them. In the next Reichstag (1928), as was to be expected, the fanatics fell off and there were but thirteen. They seemed to be going the way of the Populists and the Townsend Plan, down the road to oblivion. But in 1930, there was an ominous increase of their vote to one hundred and seven, and the end was at hand; the old order passed in 1933, giving place to new. In a word, the world today is almost at the mercy of two powers, one of which was no more than a pamphlet less than

ninety years ago, and the other a platform of twenty-five planks only seventeen years ago. No one believes more firmly than Americans in the futility of pamphlets and party platforms. Yet today that pamphlet and that platform are dominant powers in Europe.

A further remarkable aspect of the present situation is the relation of both Communism and Naziism to Christianity. Communists and Nazis both see that if their chosen dream of the future is to be realized, Christianity must be subjugated. In both movements a definitely anti-Christian tendency is very powerful, more so in Communism than in Naziism. From the start, the philosophy of the Communist Party was atheistic, although its anti-Christian tendency has not always been equally potent. Writing on religion, Lenin said, "Our program thus necessarily includes the propaganda of atheism." The Communist Party Program definitely aims at "organizing the widest possible scientific, educational, and antireligious propaganda." Atheist leagues of the "godless" thrive under Communist auspices. "At the same time," the Party Program states, "it is necessary to carefully avoid giving offense to the religious sentiments of believers which only leads to the strengthening of religious fanaticism."[1] The attitude of Communism to Christianity may thus be described as hostility, modified by cautious tolerance. This is confirmed in the new Constitution (of 1936) by Article 124, which reads:

In the object of ensuring to the citizens freedom of con-

[1] The quotations in the text are derived from E. Yaroslavsky, *Religion in the U. S. S. R.* (London: Modern Books, Ltd., 1932), pp. 1-17. The book is published "For the League of Militant Atheists."

science, the church in the U. S. S. R. is separated from the State and the school from the church. Freedom of service of religious cults and freedom of antireligious propaganda acknowledged for all citizens.

There is a certain irony in the fact that the Constitution of this essentially anti-Christian State bases its fundamental theory on an unacknowledged quotation from the New Testament. Second Thessalonians 3.10 reads: "If any will not work, neither let him eat." Article 12 of the new Constitution reads in part: "Toil in the U. S. S. R. is an obligation and a matter of honor of each citizen who is fit for toil, according to the principle, 'He who does not work, does not eat.'"

Officially the Nazi party is much more friendly to Christianity than is Communism. The twenty-fourth plank of the Platform reads:

> We demand the freedom of all religious confessions in the State in so far as their existence does not endanger or offend the ethical and moral feeling of the Germanic race. The party as such advocates the standpoint of a positive Christianity, without binding itself confessionally to a specific creed. It opposes the Jewish-materialistic spirit among us and outside of us, and is persuaded that a permanent recovery of our people can occur only from within on the foundation: "The common welfare before individual welfare."

But it is evident on the face of it that a positive Christianity which is limited by the ethical and moral feeling of the Germanic race is not in harmony with the Christianity of the New Testament, "where there cannot be Greek and Jew, circumcision and uncircumcision, barbarian, Scythian, bondman, freeman: but Christ is all, and in all" (Colossians 3.11). It is

easy to understand why, strategically, the Nazi movement finds it advisable to seek an alliance with Christianity. Germans are Christian people, and many of the leaders of the Nazi party like Rosenberg would like to see Christianity entirely destroyed.

Christianity must look forward for some time to living in the same world with powerful political and governmental forces which seek either to destroy it or to enslave it. The problem of surviving, and of surviving in a manner worthy of Christianity, in such a world, is what must be solved in the immediate future. It is no Christian solution for the Christian Church to support an armed rebellion and to call in the aid of Mohammedan Moors and of foreign Fascists. Neither is it a Christian or a democratic solution to raise hysterical cries and to propose legislation against dangerous thoughts. One of the most ominous signs of the times is the agitated attack on atheism by some Americans whose interest in theism is chiefly economic. Not even a crusade against atheists is a Christian solution, for Christians are taught to regard every human being as a brother for whom Christ died; and Christianity will either cling to this principle and live or betray it and die. In order to believe it, Christians will have to treat Communists and Fascists in a Christian spirit. Such a spirit involves not merely sentimental good will, but also understanding. Let us see whether we can find any clue to the possible future by trying to understand the central principle of these movements that are shaking our world today.

What, essentially, is Communism? It rightly calls itself the dictatorship of the proletariat. By the proletariat is meant the laboring class, the same class

that Amos saw to be oppressed by those who "pant after the dust of the earth on the head of the poor," and who experience what Edwin Markham poignantly called "the long, long patience of the plundered poor." Communism is based on the principle that it is not just for those who labor to produce the world's wealth to live in poverty, while those who own the world's wealth often live in luxury with very little labor. It is difficult to see how a Christian, any more than a Communist, can be satisfied with such a state of affairs. The aim of Communism in seeking to do away with it is also a Christian aim. But the tragedy of the Communist theory and practice is the belief that it is impossible to solve the problem of the proletariat without a dictatorship and all the ruthlessness that it entails.

Communism is, therefore, a system in unstable equilibrium, forever seeking an ideal end by unideal means which contradict the end sought. Social justice and a classless society are sought by means of the dictatorship of a class; but past and present experience of dictatorships shows them to be arbitrary and vindictive. Whatever the original aim of a dictatorship may have been—social justice or anything else—the supposed need of keeping the dictatorship in control soon subordinates all other aims to the one aim of maintaining the power of the dictator. There are indications in the all but incomprehensible Moscow trials that something of this sort is taking place in Russia.

The unstable equilibrium of Communism is further illustrated by the conflict in its fundamental theory. On the one hand, the original protest of Marx and Engels in the *Manifesto* of 1848 against the capital-

istic system was based on the violence done by that system to the sacredness of personality. The bourgeoisie, as Marx called the capitalistic class, was said to have "put an end to all feudal, patriarchal, idyllic relations." It "has left remaining no other nexus between man and man than naked self-interest, than callous 'cash payment.' . . . It has resolved personal worth into exchange value." It was because of this ideal of personal worth that the *Manifesto* flamed with indignation against the "chains" which held the proletariat and against a condition which compelled laborers to "sell themselves piecemeal," and left them exposed to "all the fluctuations of the market." The argument is summed up in the statement that "in bourgeois society capital is independent and has individuality, while the living person is dependent and has no individuality." The case for Communism in these passages rests on the rights of personality over against property, a Kantian ethic which no Christian could question. But, on the other hand, Communism has unfortunately developed another theory which has confused the whole basis of the movement, namely, the ambiguous philosophy called dialectical materialism. According to this philosophy, material and economic forces, not moral ones, are the moving powers in human history. This philosophy is really a political instrument. When used against capitalism, it is often taken to mean a complete economic determinism. All of life, all of culture and religion, is determined by economic causes. When used domestically by Communists, however, it must be interpreted in such a way as to make effort for the new social order possible and successful; thus it becomes a battlecry,

calling man to change the present economic order for a better one. The materialistic side of this theory is used as a basis for attack on all idealism and all religion; yet the valuation of personality, of moral effort, and of cosmic dialectic ought to have led Communists to a more idealistic view.

Just as Communists vacillate between moral personalism and economic materialism, so also they vacillate between internationalism and nationalism. It is entirely beyond our province to go into the feud between Trotsky and Stalin; but on this point it appears that Trotsky represents the Marxist international tradition ("Workers of the World Unite!"), while Stalin is moving more and more in the direction of nationalism. Inseparably connected with this is the conflict between pacifism and militarism which shows itself in at least two ways. First, Communists renounce international warfare but are willing to take up arms at any time in the class warfare. Secondly, while avowing pacifism, Soviet Russia has developed a vast military machine.

This sketch of the unstable equilibrium of Communism is a most inadequate hint at one of the great problems confronting the world today. How will Christianity confront it? By the customary fears, denunciations, hostilities, united fronts? Or by taking up the real challenge of Communism? The real challenge of Communism to the future of Christianity is, I take it, essentially a practical one; an appeal to the Christian test, "By their fruits ye shall know them." Here is a mere upstart in the modern world, Communism, without the inspiration of faith in God and immortality, with confused theories that are con-

stantly losing their equilibrium; yet in ninety years this movement, with all its errors and crimes, seems to have shown more organized practical social concern for the poor, to whom the gospel is preached, than has the Christian Church. This is the challenge for the future. Are there slumbering in Christian souls forces that will take up this challenge? Will the future of Christianity prove it to be a power that can stimulate and sustain the development of a just social order? There are many signs that Christendom is awakening to this task; but the Christian hope for the future of man is grounded ultimately not in this or that present token of awakening human activity, but, rather, in our faith in the goodness and the power of God, who cannot abandon humanity.

Communism is the dictatorship of the proletariat; Fascism is the dictatorship of the middle class. Large numbers of people who are not dependent on manual labor on the one hand, nor, on the other hand, economically independent by virtue of the possession of sufficient capital to guarantee security as long as they live, are in a pitiable state all over the world—in some countries, of course, more so than in others. These people, in the main, are individualists. They are not organized into labor unions; neither are they organized into great trusts or Chambers of Commerce. They see themselves as the innocent suffering bystanders in the conflicts between labor and capital. It is this class that has been the center of the world-wide Fascist movement. Believing itself to be in danger of perishing, and being more fearful of Communism than of capitalism, it has used the language of socialism (National Socialism), but has crushed both socialism

and Communism, as well as the labor unions, and has sought to preserve itself by an alliance with capitalism. The results have not been all that were expected. The sixteenth point of the Nazi program of 1922, for example, called for the preservation of a healthy middle class by the State's taking over the great department stores and breaking them up into small businesses which shall be rented out. Nothing of the sort has taken place. The emphasis has been on the national part of National Socialism far more than on the socialistic part. Much, of course, has been done to deal with social inequalities, for example, by the requirement of universal national service, but the chief stress has been on remilitarization and the development of racial and patriotic feeling.

The environment in which German Christians have to live at present is made concrete by a recent dispatch to the *New York Times* (February 11, 1937), in which it is reported that 15,000 of the Hitler Youth repeated the following Confession of Faith, led by Dr. Robert Ley, Chief of the German Labor Front, a prominent government official:

> We believe on this earth solely in Adolf Hitler. We believe that National Socialism is the sole faith and salvation of our people.
>
> We believe there is a God in Heaven who has created us, led us, and publicly laid his blessings upon us. We believe that God has sent us Adolf Hitler so that Germany may receive a foundation for its existence through all eternity. Adolf Hitler, victory, Heil!

Fascism cannot be anything permanent. It cannot hold out for the thousand years predicted by Hitler; faith in man and faith in God alike make Hitler's

prediction incredible. There must be a better way of solving the problem of the middle class and of the German people than has yet been found. Here is another challenge to Christianity. Bafflement and failure in solving the human problem hitherto is no ground for despair about the future, inasmuch as the worst bafflement and failure of past and present have been accompanied by so many tokens of the presence of a divine power working with and for humanity. Perhaps the late Spanish Catholic philosopher, Unamuno, is a sign of our times. He was a man of extraordinary religious faith and insight, trying to face the problems of his time realistically. One who knows much about him, Dr. Paul Burgess of Guatemala, summarizes Unamuno's recent life in this sentence: "He opposed the monarchy, worked for and with the Republic, turned Fascist when he saw things getting too red, and died of a broken heart when he saw the regime of Franco bringing Moors and Germans to fight its battles." Unamuno may have been wrong in some of his opinions. Right or wrong, he perished. But, as was said, he may be a sign of the times, for he was a Christian who brought his Christianity to bear on every phase of the social problem. Such a life and death as his is a ground for the hope that many other Christians will arise to take Unamuno's place in the struggle to find a Christian solution for the problem of the middle class, to which Fascism has so sensationally called our attention.

From the standpoint of cold logic, one could point out a third possibility for the social and political future of man, without any attempt to predict that it will ever be realized. If Communism is the dictator-

ship of the proletariat, and Fascism the dictatorship of the middle class, there remains the nameless possibility of a dictatorship by big capital. If the men of great wealth were to become terrified by the unstable conditions of society and be convinced that the future of human civilization, as well as their own fortunes, was at stake, is it not possible that they might unite in a government of plutocracy, a superdictatorship of wealth and force? Might they not assemble huge armies of mercenaries and develop nations of slaves? The imagination is staggered by the fancies that are suggested, and we may be grateful that they are but fancies.

Nevertheless, we should reckon with all possibilities. Why does it seem improbable that this particular possibility will be realized? Is not our fundamental reason this?—that our greatest capitalists are human beings, caught in the net of circumstance, but yet living in a Christian civilization and animated by as sincere a desire to find a right way of social living as is the laborer or the member of the middle class. We must, it is true, reckon with the possibility that Christian influences will not deter capitalists from forming this improbable order of society if the pressure of circumstances becomes great enough. What has already happened in Christian civilization should prepare us for further surprises. Let us suppose that the new plutocratic order arises. What we should then need to remember is that, in the perspective of faith, this new terror would be seen to be a passing phase of history. Christianity might for a time be driven under its influence to the caves and dens of the earth; but as surely as there is a God, so surely it

would emerge again with new courage and power. Faith in man's future is not dependent on confidence in steady, unbroken progress. It is compatible with many reverses and is the stronger for facing the facts as they have been and the possibilities of what may be, including the worst possible as well as the best possible. He who is strong enough to face the worst and work for the best is the one who comes nearest to holding the secret of the future in his possession.

The schemes for the human future which we have thus far been considering are economically oriented. That is, they aim to achieve a better future by reorganizing the economic life of man through some form of political control. But there is a large body of literature that faces the future from a quite different point of view, namely, the scientific. The imaginative anticipation of the future as science might make it was introduced to a large public by the works of Jules Verne. But his interest was more in the sensational possibilities of scientific progress than in the social consequences of science. It is Mr. H. G. Wells who has done most to forecast in fiction the new society which science would make possible. Almost every literate Anglo-Saxon has at least heard of *The Shape of Things to Come,* its prediction of a second World War beginning in 1940 and of the future organization of the world after that devastating war by a group of scientific men, chiefly aviators. Mr. John Langdon-Davies, in his *A Short History of the Future,* has recently allowed his mind to play with the coming generations down to 2000 A. D. He also sees a World War, not before 1940; he sees America becoming Fascist while the rest of the world goes Communist, and

democracy perishes. By 1975 he thinks the family will be extinct in favor of a type of social life more like that of the ant. By 2000, he expects to see crime recognized as a disease and eradicated. Not only these imaginative amateur scientists, but also many professional scientists have responded to popular demands for insight into the possibilities of the future. Time would fail us to list the books on the future as it will be affected by the progress in physics, in biology, in medicine, in chemistry, and in other sciences. A new joint volume, to which five British scientists contribute, contains the prediction that in the year 2937 there may be no disease.

No one can contemplate the amazing advance of science without being inclined to accept almost any prediction as possible. Is the future of man, therefore, to be a dictatorship of science? Is that group of devoted men who have built up our knowledge of the physical world not best fitted, after all, to assume the leadership of government? If that hateful thing that we know as graft and sometimes more broadly as politics (in the evil sense) is ever to be done away with, might its conquest not best of all be achieved by men who have shown themselves to be incorruptible in their love of truth? If the trend is toward dictatorship, would not an aristocratic dictatorship of scientists be the most acceptable type, fraught with the richest consequences for the future of humanity? Through such a dictatorship, economic intelligence, public health, maximum use of electrical power, efficient production and distribution of goods, a unified and adequate transportation system, better roads, improved facilities for education—in short, the eleva-

tion of all phases of our life to a higher level would seem to be assured.

All phases? That's the catch. The World War taught humanity many lessons, one of the most tragic of which is that of the moral neutrality of science. The moral phase is lacking from the distinctively scientific method. The War taught us that men of science did not deem it their duty to determine whether the war should be declared or not, and that, as a class, they did not deem it their duty to decide whether they should support the war, once declared. They were as conventionally patriotic as the veriest rabble-rouser, and, in every country, men who had been living for a universal truth that knows no national boundaries suddenly began to use that truth supposedly for nationalistic ends, really for the destruction of the welfare of every nation including their own. This state of affairs continues. The enormous sums that are being spent for armaments by the nations of the world at the present time are indicative of some of the chief uses to which applied science is being put by contemporary humanity. Physical and natural science does not contain any guarantee that it will be put to right uses. The cheerful prediction of a world without disease in 2937 A. D. might just as well be a prediction that bacterial warfare will have become so fiendish after a thousand years that no one will be left of the entire human race except a few bacteriologists who exist only by hiding from each other. The moral neutrality of science is a fatal defect in any proposal for a dictatorship of the scientists.

Mr. H. G. Wells's reference to the present and coming years as a race between education and catastrophe

therefore needs explanation. If the education which is racing against catastrophe consists only in scientific education of the if-then type, it may well turn out that there is no race at all, but only neutrality so far as the education is concerned, a neutrality that may be more than benevolent toward catastrophe. After all, if we are going to have a catastrophe, what kind would be more destructively efficient and cruelly successful than a scientific catastrophe, brought about by the use of scientific knowledge for criminal ends—whether in the hands of private, lawless criminals or in the hands of governments, themselves driven to criminal madness in warfare under the supposed compulsion of their fears or necessities? If catastrophe is to be forestalled by education, then education must not only include physical and natural science, with its knowledge of the human environment and of the means which man must use in order to attain his ends, not only sociological and psychological science, with its descriptions of the facts of human nature, but also philosophy and religion, with their insight into the ends for which men ought to live.

The future of Christianity, accordingly, is not imperiled by the development of science nor by dreams of a dictatorship of scientists. Like other actual or possible dictatorships, the dictatorship of science contains within itself the seeds of its own destruction and instead of being a substitute for Christianity is a challenge to Christianity to meet the needs of humanity. In fact, the crisis through which we are now passing in world history is so plainly due to lack of practical Christianity in world affairs and constitutes so clear a call for Christian action that it is little short

of amazing that the response of the Church hitherto has been so feeble. The very immensity of the opportunity which Christians confront has in a measure paralyzed their powers of action, coming, as it does, at a time when all individual existence seems insecure and faith and hope are crowded out by the anxieties and imperative needs of the present. Is Christianity going to fail? The long perspective of faith enables us to look ahead with confidence. Sooner or later Christendom will respond to the challenge of the age and its gropings. One day God will find the man or the group or the nation or society of nations that will see the promise of the human future as God himself sees it and will use the power of God and the power of man for realizing the latent possibilities that are now slumbering in humanity.

Having seen that the chief programs for the future of man which confront the world today are defective in so far as they lack Christian principles and Christian faith, and having concluded that they are not so much a peril to Christianity as an opportunity for it and a challenge to it, we shall turn to a consideration of a Christian view of the future of man.

To be a Christian gives one no magical insight into the future. When Isocrates was attacking the Sophists of the fourth century before Christ, one of the most cutting criticisms he had to offer was that "they pretend to have knowledge of the future, but are incapable of saying anything pertinent or of giving any counsel regarding the present"; and from this he gathered that the layman "has, I think, good reason to contemn such studies and regard them as stuff and nonsense, and not as a true discipline of the soul." In

modern times Hegel has been praised for refraining from using his dialectical principle as a basis for predicting the future. Nevertheless, science and daily life and Christianity all look ahead to the future, and no human soul could be a soul in the true sense if it did not plan for what is not yet.

The ordinary Christian probably inclines to lay chief stress on the maxim, "Take therefore no thought for the morrow." It is no more than human that the caution of Jesus against worry should be taken as an excuse for thoughtlessness; it is perfectly normal to rationalize the desire not to think. But on the other hand, it is somewhat surprising that the explicit teachings of Jesus which commend preparedness for the future have been relatively neglected. Jesus taught that his followers should count the cost. The sower would not go forth to sow unless he had the future in mind. The kingdom of heaven is at hand, but is also a future consummation. The coming of the Kingdom and the Day of Judgment are frequent themes of his message. The virgins who were not prepared were foolish; "watch ye therefore." The most characteristic Christian teaching about the future is not that the morrow will take thought for the things of itself, but, rather, the command, "Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh." Christian faith prescribes foresight and preparation for the future precisely because the details of the future cannot be foreseen; it judges both the wheat and the tares with reference to the coming harvest.

There have been two radically different views among Christians about the prospects for the future of man.

These views may be called the catastrophic and the developmental. According to the catastrophic view, which is that of the premillennialists, the world is becoming worse and worse; wars, earthquakes, plagues, and disasters will multiply increasingly, until suddenly the Lord comes again, destroys the kingdom of Satan, and sets up his own kingdom. Believers in such a view often take delight in wars and rumors of wars, hoping that they are signs of Armageddon and the blissful end. On the other hand, the developmental view holds that the Kingdom of God is within and among us, and that it is growing like a grain of mustard seed. Those who hold this view believe in the immanence of God in human history, although no real Christian is so optimistic as to forget that tares always grow with the wheat and that the way is strait and narrow. Yet with all his recognition of human sinfulness and the cross-bearing essential to a good life, the believer in the developmental view is confident that God has not abandoned and never will abandon his human children. If Christians are the salt of the earth and the light of the world, they have faith that the earth will not be utterly spoiled and that it can be enlightened.

Both the catastrophic view and the developmental one have hope for the future, although in very different ways. To have no hope for the future at all is to have abandoned all religious faith and to be "of all men most miserable." The minimum Christian faith about the future of man is that God, in his own way, will control that future.

We are living in times that might be called the Age of Secularism. A large proportion of men of letters

and of the cultured public are living without Christianity, although neither secularism nor any other -ism has refuted it. In George Bernard Shaw's *Man and Superman,* the Don Juan of the dream expressed his faith for the future:

> Every idea for which Man will die will be a Catholic idea. When the Spaniard learns at last that he is no better than the Saracen, and his prophet no better than Mahomet, he will arise, more Catholic than ever, and die on the barricade across the filthy slum he starves in, for universal liberty and equality. . . . Later on, Liberty will not be Catholic enough: men will die for human perfection, to which they will sacrifice all their liberty gladly.

Here we have the characteristically secular assumption that Christianity is no better than any other religion, and that it will be swept away. One is moved by the applicability of Shaw's prediction, made more than thirty years ago, to the Spanish civil war of 1936-37. But neither its timeliness nor its assumption that Christianity is to pass is the real lesson to be learned from these words. The deepest truth in them is the one that Shaw puts in the foreground, namely, that "every idea for which Man will die will be a Catholic idea." Let man think that he has abandoned Christianity and the Christian God; let him disavow all religious creeds; yet there is something in man's deepest nature that will keep him on the road to perfection. That something is God himself at work in man; and it is that which will bring man back again to God and to religion after repeated superficial disavowals of faith. Most sincere doubts about Christianity have been based on appeal to some ideal of personality or of reason which Christians have failed to attain.

These doubts, therefore, are more properly to be called doubts about Christians than doubts about Christianity. For the very ideals to which appeal is made when the doubts are raised are an expression of the cosmic reality at work in man; they are evidence for the God and the hope that are being doubted.

If thoughtful secularism has not overwhelmed Christianity and will not overwhelm it, because that very secularism is an appeal to the evidence of the soul on which Christianity itself rests, must we nevertheless say that the sinfulness of man has refuted Christianity? Never was the word sin so distasteful to men —whether Christians or not—as it is today; and never was there more need of repentance of sin in public and private life. The dictatorships, the betrayals of liberty, the pogroms, the needless stupidities of our civilization, the continued extravagance and self-indulgence of those who have and the bitter and often misguided vengefulness of those who have not are symptomatic of the sins of our age. The Allies impose on Germany a barbaric treaty at Versailles and then marvel that their barbarism produces a reaction against liberalism and parliamentary institutions. The European nations talk about enforcing neutrality in the Spanish tragedy and then do nothing, and do nothing until it is too late for anything to avail. The behavior of the human animal leads one scholar to view the brain itself as a disease, and another to regard man as less intelligent than the apes. It is true that man's conduct offers plenty of material for the pessimist.

But all this is no news to Christianity. Christians have always been aware of human sinfulness and of

man's need for redemption; no light-hearted and optimistic picture of human nature is fully Christian. In a sense, thoroughgoing Christianity is more pessimistic than Reinhold Niebuhr himself. Professor Niebuhr has written of *Moral Man and Immoral Society,* implying that, while our social structure is sinful, yet as individuals men are good. But the goodness of the individual is no easy gift of nature. It is a fight, a conquest of heredity, of bodily desires, of random impulses, of temptations from within and without. The sheltered goodness that is conscious of no problems and no foes is in constant danger of surprise attacks. Forces of evil and forces of good are constantly at war both in the individual and in the group. This is a familiar fact to Christians. What else does Calvary mean? In order for Satan (I speak figuratively) to capture the future from Christ it will be necessary for him to do more than point to the mass of human sinfulness. In addition it will be necessary for him to abolish the power of goodness. When we look at history from the standpoint of the amount of sin it manifests, we may easily become Jeremiahs or Schopenhauers; but when we ask the question whether there is any evidence or any prospect that sin will eradicate and conquer goodness, the whole matter assumes a different aspect. The very pessimism which bewails the increase of evil, like the secularism which seeks to supersede Christianity, is evidence of the power of goodness. No one could be a pessimist if he did not entertain an ideal of something better than the present state of affairs, and if he did not regard that ideal, rather than the sinful facts, as worthy of his allegiance.

As long as men exist who protest against social injustice, and envision Utopias that ought to be, so long will the future belong to faith. The real foes of Christianity are not those who call attention to the sinfulness of man, but those who cry, "Peace, Peace," when there is no peace. The theory that the working class is composed of morons who need to be held down by force is held by some morons in places of comfort and power. Moronic optimism about the present state of affairs is more perilous to the future of man and of Christianity than is the most open-eyed recognition of human sinfulness and man's need of redemption. Christian faith does not depend for its vitality and truth on the supposition that the time is or will be when this earth will be wholly freed from sin. What it does depend on is the truth that sin will never overcome righteousness.

What is the ground for belief in this truth in the present crisis of the world? It is not merely the fact that secularism and pessimism bear witness to a faith in the power of ideals. Much less is it the confidence with which business men and scientists look forward to the development of their specialties. It is more fundamentally the determination to make the future beautiful and secure. This is the driving force of radicalism and conservatism alike; it is what Socialists and Communists, Rotarians and Labor Unionists, anarchists and Legionnaires are all after. Rarely in history has there been such widespread concern about the future of humanity. This concern is in itself evidence of the power of goodness in the human heart. The human head is not so good as the heart, and people who are mere mortals, fellow human beings, chil-

dren of the same God, and all alike subject to error and to sin, hate and fear and sometimes kill each other because they are seeking the better future in different ways. It is true that the better future will not be achieved until there is more intelligent agreement about its being a future for all and not merely a future for present vested interests; it is also true that that future will be delayed by every failure to agree on methods of co-operation. But in the midst of the crisis let us not forget the source of the impulse of our common hope.

A further point about the present economic, political, and spiritual crisis is that it is being experienced more consciously and acutely by great masses of men than any previous crisis. Never has so much been thought and written about humanity's problems; books, magazines, newspapers, motion pictures, and the radio have carried information to every corner of the civilized world. All the light that journalism, science, philosophy, and religion can shed is available to almost the entire human race. It is true that literacy is far more widespread than is intelligence, and that the masses of available information are so vast that the popular mind cannot digest them. Perhaps the excess of facts and the conflict of opinions at the present time may account for the reaction toward emotionalism and psychological primitivism in a highly civilized country like Germany.

Yet it would not be sensible, in our distress over such details, to overlook the spiritual promise in the fact that the present crisis is being experienced with less blindness and ignorance than any crisis in the history of the world. The immediate result is confusion. But

the longing of humanity for truth and understanding which is evidenced by the flood of literature about our problems is itself a sign that a reason greater than our own is touching the mind of humanity and leading it to new search. Perhaps the fact that the Century of Progress Exposition at Chicago looked to the advances made in the past and present, while the New York Exposition is dedicated to a look into the future is in some way symbolic of our age. Perhaps in all our secularism and sinfulness and confusion we are turning toward the future; and perhaps we shall learn, in spite of our proud self-assertion, to discover our dependence on the power beyond man that controls all ultimate futures that will be. We cannot see man's strength without seeing his weakness. We cannot think of the Century of Progress without remembering that the public mind was more enthralled by the amusements offered there than by the most magnificent achievements of science or the solemn beauties of religion. As long as such facts of human frailty are with us we shall be reminded that man needs God.

What we are really concerned with in this chapter is meditation on the reasonableness of hope—of Christian hope—in a world that is sometimes cynical enough to abandon all hope. Twenty years ago America had high hopes that it could conquer two great enemies of the human race, alcohol and war; but Prohibition failed and the League of Nations failed. In the souls of many all hope for subduing these ancient foes of human welfare has died. Confidence in the power or the willingness of God to help humanity is at a low ebb not merely among skeptics and atheists, but even among many who believe in God.

Is this collapse of hope well grounded? Has recent history proved that the victory of spirit over matter and sin is a vain dream? It cannot be denied that we have been living through much that points toward despair, and it would be folly to deny this or to minimize it. There is overwhelming evidence, it seems to me, that the combined efforts of God and man are struggling against real and tragic obstacles in the nature of things. To take a recent instance, it would be superficial to blame the floods in the Ohio and Mississippi Valleys wholly on man; and it would be equally superficial to regard them as God's deliberate act aimed either at human punishment or at human discipline. There is something in natural processes which is not due either to the will of God or to the will of man, but which both God and man are enduring and fighting against and shaping to spiritual ends. Granting all this, and admitting that there is a mystery in things beyond our power to solve, we are far from having to despair of the future.

Recent history has demonstrated afresh a truth that is of the utmost importance for a spiritual view of the future. This truth is that men are perhaps even more responsive to faith in an ideal today than they have ever been. With all the sinister forces in the background of the World War, it cannot be denied that the war was regarded by millions in every country as a holy crusade for justice or for democracy, as a war to end war. Without such faith in an ideal, the war could not have been carried through. The ideal was unintelligent; it was shortsighted and mistaken; but nevertheless it proved the capacity of modern man for faith and devotion. The same capacity has been evidenced

to a remarkable extent by the incredible successes of Communism, Fascism, and Naziism. These movements are, it is true, dictatorships, using methods of severe regimentation. But they could never have succeeded had they not drawn masses of men to them in allegiance to a quasi-religious faith. Without their system of ideals, their ideology as it is called, these movements would have lacked unity and drive. In America, likewise, faith in what is called the New Deal has been the means of restoring confidence to millions of lives.

But, the objector will argue, this sort of faith has nothing to do with hope for the future of Christianity. The ideals in which faith has been reposed in recent years have been military, political, economic, not religious. What ground does the power of faith in such ideals give us for confidence in the future of Christianity? The objector who raises this question is realistic, but he is not realistic enough. He overlooks two points of great importance. The first is this: that if faith in false ideals is able to accomplish what we have seen in recent years, then faith is indeed a fundamental power in man's life to which the very nature of things responds. It appears that God can impart more energy to a man who has faith, even faith in an error, than to the most fair-minded and urbanely cultured individual or society whose soul has become so relaxed that it has lost the power to believe. Perhaps one part of the meaning of Communism and Fascism is that God is using them to demonstrate to enfeebled Christendom the transforming power of faith. The second point which the objector overlooks is still more important, namely, that the power of faith in false

ideals can be surpassed by the power of faith in true ideals. False ideals are false because they are not sufficiently grounded in reality; and they cannot last. True ideals are true because they are in harmony with the real; since they are true they are bound to last.

The ground for hope, then, from the human point of view, is the prospect that Christians will awaken to a use of faith equaling or surpassing that of Communists and Fascists, but will direct it toward the union of religious and scientific truth as applied to the making of a new future for man, in co-operation with God. This hope requires faith; every breath man draws and every act directed toward the future also requires faith. But the faith that this hope requires is distinguished from all competing faiths by being based on the best and highest and holiest experiences of humanity. The choice for humanity is whether it shall trust the God who has been revealed in the supreme experiences of universal human value or whether it shall turn from this God and try to make a new God out of war or race or matter. If the new God is made and followed, it will not lead humanity to the promised land, but it will only delay, because it cannot prevent, the triumph of the true God. The future of man is in the hands of the true God. The ultimate danger to Communism and also to Christianity is that men shall identify the true God so completely with the ideals to which men are now devoted that they shall be blinded to new truths which the real God is seeking to impart.

If we take the best of humanity's past experience as our clue to the God who is better than our best, one of the most important lessons we have to learn in order to build a Christian future for man is the lesson that

God alone has a totalitarian claim upon life. To say that he has a totalitarian claim means simply that man's whole life is subjected to God's will, and no areas are left neutral. Hence the future of Christianity depends on an equal development of its applications to the individual and to society.

If Christianity loses sight of its mission to the individual soul, a long period of struggle lies ahead until the individual is rediscovered. The individual is the unit of society. All social experience takes place in the lives of individuals. All social process is initiated and carried on by individuals. Only in so far as the individual has something to contribute can social values be built up. Only in so far as individuals can be trusted will social structure be sound. Without good individuals we can never have a good world. Furthermore, no social activity is a substitute for personal dignity, character, and self-respect. A world in which social mechanisms were all well run, but the individuals responsible for running them lacked a sense of the meaning and value of their own personal lives would be a world that could not long endure on such terms. The great strength of fundamentalist Christianity from the point of view of experience lay in the fact that it offered a full and free salvation which the individual could appropriate at once, and then know that he was saved. If modernistic Christianity loses sight of such individual salvation, it weakens itself needlessly. The individual relation of the soul to God is not dependent on the details of an antiquated theological creed. It is a real transaction in the relation of life to life, a committing of the human individual to the cause of the true God, and a faith that that God

is just and forgiving. Something that amounts to conversion, with its phases of justification and sanctification, is a real and essential part of the experience of every Christian individual.

Furthermore, the relation of the individual to God is, in a legitimate sense, a release, and if it must be said, an escape for the conscientious soul from the overwhelming burden of social responsibility. A person who faces the evils of human society with open eyes and a set of Christian ideals is made conscious of the need for reforms and revolutions on every side. In boards of directors, committees of labor unions, legislatures, and congresses, cabinets and armies—everywhere one sees men working at cross-purposes, blindly, sometimes well-meaningly, sometimes selfishly, but leading the world from disaster to disaster. When a Christian once fully realizes the need of the world for a Christian solution of its problems, he may become fairly obsessed by the obligation to plunge into the solution of all of them by his own efforts. The vast complexity of the need may drive him from one problem to another, from one suffering group to another, and result in making him utterly distracted in view of the limitation of his resources in coping with so much. Under such conditions it is a merciful faith which can assure each individual that he is not God and that he is not personally responsible for removing all of the ills from which humanity suffers. This faith sustains the individual in his exhaustion and despair with the conviction that God is in control and that he will find others to carry on the work which no single person can possibly do. Without a sustaining faith of this sort which allows periods of respite and

release from the intensity of life's struggles, the social problem would become unendurable to sensitive spirits. Christianity cannot give up its promise to the individual.

On the other hand, it would be even more serious if Christianity were to neglect its social mission as herald of the Kingdom of God. If the individual finds God, whether in mystical or ethical or intellectual experience, he finds not merely the source of his individual salvation; he finds the universal God of all. It is henceforth impossible for him to think of his religion as a mere relation between himself and God; it is necessarily a relation to all of God's children. It is no *Privatsache,* no private affair. It is the most public and social thing about him, binding him with ties of love to every person in the world, and connecting every person with the divine plan. How, then, can a Christian set off religious experience in one compartment of life, as concerned only with the soul's salvation, and relegate the economic and the political to another compartment with which religion has nothing to do? As long as men are men there will be differences of opinion about details. But among Christians there can be no difference about the obligation to express Christianity through a redeemed economic and political order as well as through the experiences of redeemed individuals. The task of the Christianity of the future is to achieve both individual salvation and social salvation for the human race. This opens a perspective to a task that would be appalling were it not for the sense of security that comes from faith in the real God.

Thus closes our consideration of the future of Chris-

tianity. We have found no witchcraft or magic by which we can foretell coming events. But we have found principles of rational faith which enable us to face the future with a disciplined hope.

INDEX

Acts, 123
America, 12, 47f., 50, 72
American Revolution, 39
Americanism, 49
Americus Vespucius, 50
Amos, 37, 47
Anarchists, 145
Anglican Settlement, 65
Anthropology, 22f.
Arabians, 85
Archaeology, 11, 54
Aristotle, 9
Armageddon, 141
Arminian, 85
Assyria, 38, 48
Astrology, 24f.
Astronomers, 12
Astronomy, 15f.
Atheist leagues, 125
Authoritarianism, 47

Baal, 35
Babylonia, 39, 48
Barthians, 76
Beaven, Albert W., 74
Behaviorism, 23
Belief in God, future of, 84-95
Bergmann, Ernst, 91
Bible, 40, 120; as best seller, 60; as laboratory manual, 61; critical view of, 46-48; future of, Chap. II, esp. 43-62; scientific study of, 53-55
Bible-class movement, 60
Bible reading, 60
Biblical curriculum, 48
Biblical history, 55
Biblical literalism, 89
Biology, 20f.
Bowne, Borden P., 122
Brain, 102
Brookings Institution, 75
Browning, Robert, 67
Buddhism, 51, 80
Burgess, Paul, 133

Caesar worship, 38
Calvary, 62, 144
Calvin, John, 58, 65
Calvinist, 85
Capitalism, 129; downfall of, 36
Catholic faith, 88
Catholics, 72, 79f.
Century of Progress Exposition, 147
Chemistry, 15f.
China, 123
Christ, 50, 53, 62, 64, 88, 126; follower of, 79
Christian atheism, 88
Christian Church, 9
Christianity, 42-45; future of, 9, 43, 153-154; liberal, 43; orthodox, 43
Church, future of, Chap. II, esp. 62-82
Church School, 48
Church union, 71
City of Is-to-Be, 10
Colossians, 126
Communism, 12, 51, 75, 123, 125-132, 148
Communist, 32, 44, 94, 145, 150
Communist revolution, 41
Confucianism, 80
Confucius, 42
Congregation for the Propaganda of the Faith, 81
Congregational union, 71
Consciousness, 102f.
Constitution, 49f.
Co-operation, 71ff., 146
Cosmic Power, 103
Crusades, 52
Culture, 51

Daniel, 9, 26f., 47
Dark Ages, 12, 44
Darwin, Charles, 113
Declaration of Independence, 49f.
Democracy, 47

Descartes, 85, 96, 110
Determinism, 23, 122f.
Deuteronomy, 108
De Voto, Bernard, 117
De Wulf, Maurice, 84
Dialectical materialism, 33, 36
Dialectics, 13
Diatessaron, 54
Dictatorship of scientists, 136, 138
Dictatorship of the proletariat, 36, 131
Discouragement, grounds for, 65-69
Dooley, Mr., 22
Don Juan, 142
Driesch, Hans, 122
Duke University, 23

Egypt, 31, 48
Egyptian literature, 53
Emergency Peace Campaign, 76
Endocrinology, 20
Engels, Friedrich, 123
England, 44, 72
Entropy, 18
Ephraim, 35
Evidence for God, 98-107
Evil, two views of, 104f.
Evolution, 86
Experiences, spiritual, 29

Faith, 28, 49, 70, 108, 122; Christian, 40, 51; in God, 98f.; religious, 35, 42, 141
Fascism, 12, 47, 124, 127, 131-134, 135, 149, 150
Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America, 71, 74f.
Fellowship of Faiths, 72
Fichte, 124
Fichtean transcendental idealism, 40
Foreign missions, 65
France, 72
Fraternities, 60
Freedom, 73f.
French Revolution, 40
Fundamentalism, 77
Future, knowledge of, Chap. I; of Bible, 43-62; of Church, 62-82; of God, 95-119; of man, Chap. IV.

Genesis, 31
Geneva, 72
German Christians, 132
German church, 76
German Labor Front, 132
German revolution, 40
Germany, 57, 72, 123
Gestalt, 23
Gilson, Etienne, 84
God, 14, 16, 18-20, 27, 35, 37, 42, 44, 50, 55, 58ff.; as Cosmic Player, 122; as Heavenly Father, 88, 94; as personal or impersonal, 94; future of, Chap. III; suffering of, 108f.; tension in, 94
Gospels, 53f.
Great Depression, 65
Greece, 48

Hegel, 51, 113, 124, 140
Heine, Heinrich, 40f.
Herrmann, Wilhelm, 58
Higher Criticism, 55
Hindu, 51, 80
Historical perspective, 69, 77
History, 21ff.
Hitler, Adolph, 22, 79, 124, 132
Hitler Youth, 132
Hobbes, 85
Holland, 72
Holmes, Oliver Wendell, 17
Hosea, 35, 47
Humanism, 76, 88, 118f.
Huxley, Aldous, 11
Hypotheses, 12

Immanence, 94
Immortality, 109
Internationalism, 79
Isaiah, 31, 47; Second, 108; Third, 47
Isis, 53
Isocrates, 139
Israel, 35, 37, 39
Italian Communist Party, 124
Italy, 57, 123

James, William, 122
Jehovah, 35
Jesus, 11, 39, 44, 50, 58, 69, 80, 88, 111, 140
Jews, 51, 72, 79, 85, 126
John, 38, 53f., 111

John, First Epistle of, 35, 92
Jones, E. Stanley, 75
Joshua, 54
Judges, 54

Kagawa, Toyohiko, 75
Kant, 51, 109
Kantian critique, 40
Kantian ethic, 129
Kingdom of God, 39f., 82, 141, 153
Knowledge, certain, 13; scientific, 15-26

Labor unionists, 145
Langdon-Davies, J., 13, 135
Laws, Plato's, 110
Laymen's Foreign Missions Inquiry, 76
League of Nations, 22, 147
Legionnaires, 145
Lenin, Nikolai, 125
Ley, Robert, 132
Liberalism, 47
Lippmann, Walter, 67
Locke, John, 101
Logic, 13f., 26
Luke, 53f.
Luther, 65, 69

Macbeth, 34f.
McConnell, Francis J., 88
Machiavelli, 124
Man, future of, Chap. IV
Marburg, 57
Mark, 53f.
Markham, Edwin, 128
Marx, Karl, 113, 123, 129
Marxist, 36
Matthew, 53f.
Mathematics, 13f., 26
Matter, 37
Maya, 93
Mendel, Gregor, 20
Mersenne, 85
Messianic hope, 39
Methodist union, 71
Middle Ages, 87
Mind, 37
Modernism, 77
Mohammedan, 51, 80, 127
Moody, Dwight L., 47
Moors, 133
Movement for World Christianity, 76
Mussolini, Benito, 117, 124
Mystical fellowship, 80, 153

National Socialism, 41, 115, 124
Naturalism, 106f.
Nazi, program of 1922, 132; revolution, 41
Naziism, 124-126
Necessity of eternal being, 101
Negro, 69
Nelson, N. C., 11
New Testament, 32, 126
Niebuhr, Reinhold, 144
Nietzsche, Friedrich, 112-115
Novelties, emergence of, 103

Old Testament, 37, 39, 108
Oldham, J. H., 72
Omar Khayyam, 123
Osiris, 53
Oxford Group Movement, 65

Palestine, 48
Pareto, Vilfredo, 112, 116-118
Past, knowledge of, 10f.
Patmos, 39
Paul, Saint, 36, 62, 119
Pentateuch, 47, 54
Personality, 101
Philosophy, 9, 87; Greek, 44
Philosophical theology, 77
Physics, 15f.
Plato, 9, 14, 108, 110f.
Plurality in God, 94
Polytheism, 93
Predictions, Biblical, 38-40; conditional, 19ff., 24; religious, 27-42; scientific, 19-31, 42
Prince of Peace, 39, 53
Privatsache, 153
Progress, material and religious, 70
Prohibition, 147
Protestant Church, 63
Protestant scholars, 67
Protestantism, 63, 72, 73, 79
Psychology, 23f.

Rationalization, 97
Realist, social, 117
Reason, 100f.; laws of, 14
Reformation, 44

Reichstag, 124
Religion, indefiniteness of, 29ff.
Religious education, 48f.
Religious experience as evidence for God, 105f.
Renaissance, 85
Republic, Plato's, 110, 123
Revelation, 9, 26f., 31, 47; dogmatic view of, 55-59; functional view of, 55-59
Romans, 119
Rome, 38, 48, 124
Rosenberg, Alfred, 77, 127
Rural church, 68
Russell, Bertrand, 33f., 36, 89ff.
Russia, 33, 57, 94, 123; Soviet, 130; U. S. S. R., 126
Russian Church, 95

Satan, 104, 141, 144
Sauer, Wilhelm, 12
Schopenhauer, 144
Science, 11
Science, definiteness of, 29ff., anthropological, 26; physical, 15f.; physicochemical, 26
Scriptures, 5
Sermon on the Mount, 62
Seventh-Day Adventist, 39
Shakespeare, 34
Shaw, George Bernard, 142
Social responsibility of the Church, 67f., 74, 80; of individual, 152f.
Socialism, 123, 145
Sociology, 22
Socratic gadflies, 74
Spain, 12, 123
Spanish Republic, 133
Spaulding, E. G., 122
Spengler, Oswald, 13, 112, 115-116
Stalin, J. V., 77, 130
Statistics, 12, 24
Student Christian Movement, 71
Suffering Servant, 39
Superman, 113
Synoptics, 53

Tatian, 54
Theism, 106f.
Theistic faith, 85
Thomas Aquinas, 58, 84, 88
Timaeus, 108
Tolerance, 80
Tolstoy, 41
Townsend Plan, 124
Transcendence, 94
Trinity, 93
Trotsky, 130
Truth, eternal, 14f.

Unamuno, Miguel, 133
United Church of Canada, 71
Unity in God, 94
Universal Christian Council, 72f.
Utopias, 13, 145

Values, 18ff., 89f.; as evidence for God, 104f.
Van den Bruch, Moeller, 124
Verification of Christian faith, 112
Verne, Jules, 135
Versailles Treaty, 143
Voltaire, 85

War, 60
Wells, H. G., 135, 138
Wesley, John, 44, 69
Whitehead, A. N., 65
Wilson, Edmund, 117
Witness of Jehovah, 39
World War, 66, 109, 113, 116, 135, 137, 148
Worldliness of Church, 69

Yang and Yin, 92
Yaroslavsky, E., 125n.

Zarathustra, 114

Date Due

NEW BOOK

N 15 '37

F 7 '38

A- 27 '38

Ap 9 '38

O 28 '38

F 12 '41

F 4- '42

F 23 '42

D 19 '45

FE 23 '51

Princeton Theological Seminary-Speer Library
1 1012 01016 0341